

Arab Times



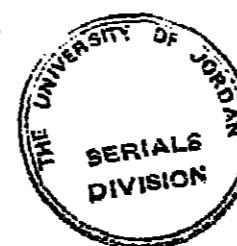
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ARAB TIMES



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24 PAGES 150 FILES

East wind won't sweep Gulf

Situation differs and democracy practised: Sheikh Khalifa

Arab Times exclusive



Jarallah interviewing Sheikh Khalifa (left).

Duarte,
64, is
dead

SAN SALVADOR, Feb 23, (AP): Jose Napoleon Duarte, who became El Salvador's first democratically elected President in 50 years but was unable to end a 10-year civil war, died today, his doctor said. He was 64.

"Duarte died of respiratory failure at 11:50 a.m. (1750 GMT)," said his personal physician, Jose Luis Saca.

He had battled cancer in his stomach and liver for 21 months.

In May 1988, doctors at Walter Reed Army Medical Centre in Washington diagnosed the cancer. They removed 60 per cent of Duarte's stomach and said the cancer had spread to his liver.

Doctors gave him six to 18 months to live, but he outlasted the predictions.

He was reported near death at least two times previously. His condition worsened this week, and doctors had said death was imminent.

Islamic world marks Miraaj

THE Islamic world Thursday night celebrated the Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) nocturnal journey from Makkah to Jerusalem and his ascension to the heavens from there.

The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs held an official, religious ceremony following the Isha (night) prayers at the state Grand Mosque attended by Minister Undersecretary Mohammed Nasir Al Hamdan and a number of Muslim clerics.

Weather

FAIR weather with light to moderate northwesterly wind.
State of sea: Slight to moderate.
High water: 11:00 am.
Low water: 6:00 am, 6:00 pm.
Sunrise: 6:20 am.
Sunset: 5:45 pm.
Maximum temperatures recorded:
Kuwait: 21°C/70°F
Abdali: 18°C/64°F
Falka: 20°C/68°F
Minimum temperatures recorded:
Kuwait: 9°C/45°F
Abdali: 12°C/54°F
Falka: 12°C/54°F
Maximum temperatures expected:
Kuwait: 21°C/70°F
Abdali: 18°C/64°F
Falka: 20°C/68°F
Maximum humidity recorded:
Kuwait: 77 per cent
Abdali: 60 per cent
Falka: 48 per cent

Muslims seek independence

Bigest ever demo in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, Feb 23, (Agencies): Nearly 400,000 Kashmiri Muslims demanding independence from India today held the biggest demonstration the Kashmir valley has ever seen, police and residents said.

Nearly half the 800,000 population of Srinagar, summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir state, gathered near the office of the United Nations military Observer Group to hand in petitions demanding independence for Kashmir, police estimated.

Many protesters wore white funeral shrouds to demonstrate their willingness to die for their cause. Security forces declined to intervene.

At one point, demonstrators hurled a barrage of rocks at the car of Maulvi Farooq, the city's chief Muslim cleric, after the driver refused to stop.

The driver reversed at high speed, causing the vehicle to overturn. The cleric, however, was unharmed and was rescued by security personnel, police said.

In another incident, one of two bombs believed set by Muslim separatists injured three people when it exploded inside a state-run bus in a downtown area of Srinagar, police said.

The second bombing, part of an ongoing sabotage campaign by the separatists aimed at government property, damaged the interior of a state bank, but caused no injuries, police said.

Demonstrators waved Pakistani flags and the flags of the numerous militant groups orchestrating the pro-independence movement. A few demonstrators en route to the UN office hoisted flags on government buildings.

A Pakistani flag was flown from the clock tower in Lal Chowk, the city's main commercial area.

Iraqi linked to Saudi killings

MANILA, Feb 23, (AP): Authorities have arrested an Iraqi who allegedly is a member of a fake passport ring that may have provided travel documents to gunmen who killed three Saudi diplomats in Bangkok this month, an immigration spokeswoman said today.

Sarah Andes, spokeswoman of the commission on immigration and deportation, said immigration officers arrested Mustafa Mohammad at a restaurant he owns in Manila's Ermita district.

Two other Iraqis, identified as Alameri Alaa Abbas and Riad Mumabed Fanoush, Mohammad's business partners, were not there at the time of the raid and are believed to be in hiding, she said.

Ms Andes said the immigration office ordered their arrest on the recommendation of the Department of Foreign Affairs following intelligence reports linking them to the Feb 1 killing of three Saudi Arabian diplomats in Bangkok.

A Manila newspaper, quoting immigration office sources, said Mohammad, 27, formerly from Baghdad, and Fanoush may have been directly involved in the Bangkok killings.

Mohammad denied links with the group or with the murders.

By Ahmed Al Jarallah
Editor-in-Chief, Arab Times

BAHRAIN'S Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman has said that the winds of change that swept across Europe cannot be applied to the Gulf because of the relative prosperity of the region.

He said the fall of the communist regimes was mainly due to economic deprivations, which he described as the "heat wave" leading to their downfall. Due to suppression and coercive measures, the people rebelled and sought new ideologies. This situation does not apply in the Gulf, he said, because of the existence of democracy and freedom of opinion.

Inside today's issue
business survey of
Kuwait — a supplement
Pages 11-18

He said: "The region's ideology — democracy and freedom of speech is efficient enough (to withstand pressure of) foreign ideologies propagated by some opportunities."

He claimed the superpowers "agreed to create a new Yalta in Eastern Europe." The situation in the Arab world, he said, differed vastly from that of East bloc countries.

"Regional countries are wealthy nations; the regimes here practice social justice. What our people want is a fair distribution of wealth, and that is what is happening. Our wealth enables us to achieve social justice," he said.

"Our democracy and freedom of speech is not something forced by the constitution but it is practical — practised in everyday life," he stressed.

He cited the example of Kuwait. "When HH the Amir of Kuwait opens his doors for his people and moves amongst them, without guards, he becomes one with the people. He listens to their complaints in his diwan; he, thus, shows the highest degree of democracy — of a special type — demolishing all barriers between the government and the governed."

"When the Kuwaiti people discuss their problems in diwanas they are practising natural democracy," he said.

Similar practices existed in Bahrain and other brother Gulf states like Saudi Arabia, he added.

"We are not suffering from any economic crisis, our regimes do not (use) coercive measures," he said.

He said people's call for the return of parliamentary life in Kuwait was dealt with "reasonably" by the Kuwaiti government, which listened to the wishes of the people and opened a direct dialogue with them; and the situation became clear."

Commenting on the economic conditions during the 1990s, he admitted a decline in oil prices had adversely affected revenue but he said conditions have improved since 1988. He expects oil revenue to rise further, particularly due to the cessation of hostility in the region. He also expects new markets for Gulf oil to open in Eastern Europe.

He believes that the lifting of trade barriers by the European Economic Community in 1992 would bring about prosperity in the Gulf region.

"Industry (in the Gulf) would flourish because the cost of industrialisation would be comparatively lower than in Western Europe," he said.

He said Bahrain now allows Gulf citizens to enter the country without visas and has eased visa services for expatriate residents in the Gulf countries.

"Any person holding a valid residence in any Gulf country can now visit Bahrain; visas would be issued immediately on application," he said. Saudi residents can obtain entry visas at the Bahrain-Saudi border on the causeway; others can get it at the airport or can have visas endorsed within a day from a Bahrain embassy, he added.

He said tourism has developed in Bahrain.

He urged GCC leaders to hold summit meetings every six months because "problems can't be resolved unless they are tackled at the root."

He said GCC countries must tackle problems without any prejudice "without saying that the time is not suitable to discuss certain matters."

ACC leaders arrive in Amman

AMMAN, Feb 23, (AP): Leaders of the four Arab Co-operation Council states gathered in Jordan today to co-ordinate political efforts, despite the collapse of proposals for a joint Iraq-Jordanian-Syrian front against Israel.

President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and Ali Abdullah Saleh of North Yemen flew into Queen Alia international airport south of Amman in the afternoon and were met by King Hussein.

The arrival ceremonies for each leader were shown by state-run Jordan television.

In an exclusive interview, he said: "Some people believed that the events of Eastern Europe (could) be applied in the Gulf and Arab peninsula. I (want) to tell them our conditions differ, because the quality of life differs."

Sheikh Khalifa said the changes in Eastern Europe were discussed briefly at the GCC summit, recently held in Oman.

Kuwaiti tanker on fire

MANAMA, Feb 23, (AP): A flotilla of salvage tugs worked today to prevent a flareup of fires that could touch off another fire aboard a US-flagged Kuwaiti tanker crippled by fire a day earlier.

US navy warships warned other vessels to keep at least four miles away from the fire-ravaged Surf City in busy seaways of the southern Gulf, 20 miles (32 km) off the coast of the United Arab Emirates.

US military officials identified the two persons killed in yesterday's fire as the ship's master, Derrick F. Linardich, 38, of Norfolk, Virginia, and the first mate, Steven P. McHugh, 34, of East Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

The other 23 crew members, all Americans with one possible exception, scrambled to lifeboats as flames raced half the length of the 700-foot (213-metre) ship toward the stern. The crewmen, including four with minor injuries, were rescued by the American missile frigate USS Simpson, on patrol nearby.

One survivor, Wayne Cohen, 27, of Boston said the captain and first mate were in the location where work was

being done on a cargo tank when "the whole ship caught fire."

The 81,283-ton tanker, one of five Kuwaiti tankers still sailing under protection of the Stars and Stripes 19 months after the end of the Iraq-Iran war, was bound for Italy with a cargo of naphtha and diesel fuel.

C. Miles Sheldon, head of Chesapeake Shipping Inc., the subsidiary set up by the Kuwait Oil Tanker Co. to operate the US-flagged ships, told a Dubai news conference that the bodies of the captain and first mate were recovered and would be sent home from Dubai.

He said that although the fires had been contained and the tanker was no longer in immediate danger of sinking, its condition remained unpredictable.

Sheldon said the ship and cargo together were worth more than \$30 million but "we do not feel it's a total loss."

In Kuwait, Abdul-Fattah Al Bader, chairman of KOTC, said the fire most likely had been caused by a short circuit. He agreed with US military officials who earlier discounted the possibility of Iranian sabotage or a drifting mine.

Arafat okays terms

Enrile regrets

Mistake named Cory

MANILA, Feb 23, (AP): Opposition Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile today said the Philippines is worse off under Corazon Aquino and apologised for helping install her as President in the 1986 "people power" revolt.

"I'm sorry," Enrile said during a call-in programme on radio station DZRH. "I apologise to our people for that event, for what happened, because we discovered that the people in power now have different goals. I am asking your apology because we all made a mistake."

Enrile, President Marcos' defence minister, led a handful of reformist military officers who overthrew Marcos following the fraud-marred Feb 7, 1986 presidential election decided against Aquino.

"The government is preparing for Sunday's festivities to mark the uprising. But Enrile said there was no reason to celebrate."

"What is there to celebrate?" Enrile asked. "Our people are having a hard time. We do not see any fruits of that effort. The vision and the dream and the direction we wanted the nation to take was lost."

"The darkness and the shortcomings of the government in the past are still present in the current administration," he said.

Enrile expressed the same views of the underground revolutionary alliance for the masses-soldiers of the Filipino people, which spearheaded the Dec. 1-7, 1989, coup attempt, the sixth and most serious bid to topple Aquino.

According to UN reports, Abu Hassan underlined that drugs was the common enemy of both developed and developing countries as it sedulously endangers the security of several world countries.

He said illicit drug trafficking has of late become a giant industry in which thousand of millions of dollars were invested, noting that the cash price of traded drugs had exceeded the cash price of international oil trade.

The Kuwaiti envoy urged all countries, particularly those whose laws do not deter legislation against drugs to quickly enact such laws, as that stern punishments were more effective.

He said Kuwait, which enacted two laws on combating illicit drug trafficking in 1983 and 1987, carrying punishments which are tantamount to 15 years imprisonment, was currently considering further deterrent punishments including confiscation of money accumulated from illicit drug trafficking.

Bail at PS
Kafil system annulled

KUWAIT'S Interior Ministry has decided to abrogate the personal guarantor (Kafil) system at all police stations in the country.

Police stations have in the past required a Kuwaiti guarantor to sign out both Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis involved in criminal offences and misdemeanours. Guarantors were as a matter of practice held responsible in the event their charges fled the country before the case came to court.

The personal guarantee system is being replaced with the granting of bail ranging from KD30 to KD100 depending on the type of offence.

However, if the chief of investigations deems it necessary he can keep the offender in jail for upto 21 days pending further investigations.

The new system has been welcomed by observers because it would relieve minor offenders (traffic, quarrelling) from the embarrassment of calling a Kuwaiti guarantor.

The bail is refundable after due process, Interior Ministry sources said.

Call to intensify drug war

UNITED NATIONS, Feb 23, (Kuwait): Kuwait has called on the international community to exert intensified and sincere efforts to combat the problem of drugs which is posing dangerous threats on all levels of human life.

Addressing the United Nations General Assembly's special session on drugs, Kuwait's permanent representative Mohamed Abdalla Abu Hassan yesterday called for orchestrated efforts to destroy all the rings involved in producing, smuggling and consuming drugs.

Reciting UN reports, Abu Hassan underlined that drugs was the common enemy of both developed and developing countries as it sedulously endangers the security of several world countries.

He said illicit drug trafficking has of late become a giant industry in which thousand of millions of dollars were invested, noting that the cash price of traded drugs had exceeded the cash price of international oil trade.

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Khamenei ability questioned

NICOSIA, Feb 23, (Reuters): A senior Iranian cleric said today subversives in the country's theological schools were trying to undermine spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

In an address to Friday prayers in Tehran, Ayatollah Ahmad Azari Qomi spoke of lingering questions in religious circles about Khamenei's credentials for the position of supreme leader.

He urged support for Khamenei and President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and said much of the current anti-government criticism couched in Islamic terms was politically loaded.

Political analysts said Azari Qomi's blunt speech in the capital, broadcast live by Tehran Radio, indicated the rifts were too deep to contain within cler

INTERNATIONAL

ARAB TIMES, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1990

France to give Dhaka flood control aid



Ershad received Mitterrand (left) on his arrival at Dhaka airport. (Reuter wirephoto)

DHAKA, Feb 23, (UPI): During a state visit by President Francois Mitterrand, France agreed today to provide 140 million French francs (about \$25 million) to help finance a five-year World Bank flood control project worth \$146 million.

Bangladesh and France also agreed to renew a 10-year nuclear co-operation agreement which was to expire in August. Under the new agreement, France will help Bangladesh with training of personnel and supply of equipment. But France will not supply any nuclear reactor, said Foreign Secretary Abu Ahsan at the end of hour-long official talks.

"We neither have plans to join the nuclear club nor requested any nuclear plant from France," he said.

Ahsan said Mitterrand and Bangladesh President Hussain Muhammad Ershad held private

Attempt to assassinate Khaleda Zia

DHAKA, Feb 23, (UPI): The Bangladesh Nationalist Party said in a news conference yesterday that an attempt was made on the life of party chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia as she led a procession towards the Shahid Minar, a memorial built to pay homage to the martyrs of the Bengali language movement in 1952.

Several bombs were hurled and shots fired near the procession Wednesday.

The BNP official said workers of the rival opposition Awami League and its student front, backed by the government, made the attack on the BNP procession. He described the attack as part of a conspiracy to destroy the

talks for 40 minutes before joining the official talks led by the foreign ministers of the two countries.

The talks were held in a warm and cordial atmosphere, there being no contentious issues between two countries, Ahsan said.

Mitterrand told the meeting that the purpose of his visit was

to get first-hand knowledge about the country and establish personal contact with a courageous people fighting with a scourge of nature. He was referring to the periodic monsoon floods which destroy crops and spread disease several times per decade in Bangladesh, in which drain the mighty Ganges and

Brahmaputra river systems, fed by the world's tallest mountains — the Himalayas.

"We appeal to the world not merely to help Bangladesh. We ask them to help this country in a way it could increase its own resources so that the country can build its future," Mitterrand said at a civil reception.

Mitterrand said the terms of the deal had yet to be worked out.

He acknowledged that the decision would displease India. But, he pointed out that India itself purchased a French nuclear plant and he questioned why a similar facility should not be supplied to Pakistan, New Delhi's rival and foe in three wars since 1948.

Mitterrand said France had decided to "show full confidence" in Pakistan's assurances that its nuclear programme was geared toward peaceful purposes, despite claims by experts that it has either produced, or is on the verge of manufacturing, atomic weapons.

India subscribes to those claims, a stand reflected in its reaction to the French offer to Pakistan.

French nuclear offer to Pakistan

Muslims urge to support Janata

NEW DELHI, Feb 23, (Kama): Major Muslim organisations of India yesterday urged minorities to ensure victory of the ruling Janata Dal in Feb 27 election for eight states and one union territory.

In a joint statement, leaders of four Muslim parties appealed to all sections of the people to support the Janata Dal and defeat the Congress (I) in the polls.

The statement came following Shahi Jamiyat of Jama Masjid Syed Abdullah Bukhari's support to the National Front government in the coming election.

The Muslims are in good position in these states and their support will definitely brighten chances of the National Front in the elections.

Indian Muslim leaders said three month record of National Front government has created a new sense of confidence among minorities and the weaker sections.

There are reasons to hope that the Indian politics would go through a sea of change under the stewardship of V.P. Singh.

Sikh militants kill jail official

CHANDIGARH, India, Feb 23, (UPI): Sikh extremists yesterday shot dead a senior jail official in northern Punjab state as a call by a militant student group for disruptions of rail services evoked a partial response, officials said.

An unspecified number of militants ambushed Pyare Lal Virdee, the assistant superintendent of the Amritsar Central Jail, as he stepped out of his car in front of a government office in the Sikh holy city, 230 miles (368 km) northwest of the state capital of Chandigarh.

The victim had gone to the location to drop off his wife who worked in the office, police said.

India shows concern

French nuclear offer to Pakistan

NEW DELHI, Feb 23, (Agencies): India today expressed concern over France's decision to sell Pakistan a nuclear power plant, contending it would enhance its rival's alleged efforts to produce atomic weapons.

A foreign ministry spokesman said the government of Prime Minister V.P. Singh had raised the matter with France, which is currently working to expand its commercial and political relations with both Pakistan and India.

The Indian reaction came two days after French President Francois Mitterrand announced during a visit to Pakistan that his government would sell Islamabad a nuclear plant. Speaking at a joint news conference with Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto,

Battle for survival

Poll predicts Congress (I) defeat

NEW DELHI, Feb 23, (UPI): A major opinion poll released yesterday predicted former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress (I) Party will be defeated in next week's state assembly elections.

Experts believe Feb 27 elections to seven state assemblies — all governed by Rajiv's Congress (I) Party — are a major test for the former Indian prime minister. A poor showing at the voting booths would leave his party powerless across the crucial north India, forcing opposition to his party leadership.

The survey conducted by Sunday magazine predicted Rajiv's Congress (I) Party would win just 234 seats — 19 percent of 1,329 seats up for grab in the five northern state of Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan, and the two western states of Maharashtra and Gujarat.

religious resurgence among India's main community, the Hindus, which also helped the BJP increase its seats in Parliament's lower house from two to 88.

His prediction appeared to be backed by a survey conducted by the magazine Sunday that said Congress would lose all eight states, which it now rules.

The BJP would win Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, while sharing power with another right-wing Hindu party in Maharashtra, the survey, released yesterday, said.

It also forecast victory for a BJP-Janata Dal combine in Rajasthan. The Janata Dal was expected to win in Bihar, Gujarat and Orissa, the survey said although

ough many political analysts said Congress could do better than expected in Bihar.

"A BJP triumph in the north is the most likely scenario. That would put intense pressure on the government," Roy said. "The BJP would start demanding their pound of flesh."

Their (BJP) demands could increase and force the communists to withdraw support for Singh at some stage," Roy said.

The crucial battles will be fought in the Hindi-speaking heartland, in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Singh's Janata Dal and the BJP crushed Congress in November in the Hindi belt.

Kashmir family's split down the line

BUGINA VILLAGE, Pakistan, Feb 23, (AP): Ibrahim Bhat can see the house of his brother across a brook, he can hear the sounds of celebrations when there's a wedding or waiting for a death. But he is forbidden to walk the 10 yards (metres) to get there.

Bhat, 80, is banned from the house of his brother, Suliman, by a ceasefire line that separates India from Pakistan.

Indian troops man bunkers opposite Bhat's corn fields where the snow-capped mountains of the Himalayas stretch into the heavens. Pakistani trenches line the hills behind him. Sometimes a rifle of automatic weapons fires cuts through the peace of Bugina.

Bhat and his 70-year-old brother are Kashmiris, the people who have inhabited the Himalayan village for centuries.

The land was split between India and Pakistan in 1947 following the end of British colonial rule. The two countries fought over the region in 1948 and 1965. Now, though few fear another conflict, tensions are heating up on the line.

On Jan 20, Indian troops launched an assault on Muslim separatists in India's state of Jammu-Kashmir, the only state in predominantly Hindu India with a Muslim majority.

The separatists want either an independent Kashmir or union with Pakistan, a Muslim nation.

Tensions escalated when Indian troops killed several Pakistani students Feb 11 on the border after the students tried to cross into India in solidarity with the separatists.

The recent troubles have made it even harder for Bhat and his brother.

When times were good, the men would meet on a small rock in the middle of the stream and gossip about life on either side. Sometimes they would bring dishes for each other, made by their wives. There are no telephones.

Now, Pakistan and Indian troops have forbidden them from even talking.

"Don't let me catch you speaking to the brook, old man," Pakistan Army Lt. Razi Aqeeb shouted at Bhat one recent day near the ceasefire line. "You've lived a long time. Don't end it with an Indian bullet."

"They are my people, how can I ignore them?" Bhat growled as his beard, dyed red with henna, bobbed up and down. "Politics has divided my house in two. My heart is weeping."

Aqeeb commands the post above Bhat's house and is responsible for security in Bugina, a village of about 500 people.

"We are ready for the enemy," Aqeeb said, full of a soldier's bravado. "We have all the newest weapons and we are sure to win."

The young lieutenant's bluster is not shared by Mohammed Arfan, a 45-year-old farmer who lives in a big blue house just yards from the Bhat clan.

Arfan fled to Pakistan after the 1965 war. He joined the Pakistani army and travelled throughout the country, but chose to settle in Bugina because it was the nearest he could get to his native home.

"This is my valley and fighting would only make us poorer," said the father of six. "I wish the politicians would forget us and then maybe we could live in peace."

Arfan grew up on the Indian side of the ceasefire line. To this day, his father and three brothers live in a small compound across the creek in India.

"I came back in 1970. I was homesick for the Kashmir but living here gave happiness with pain," he said. "I am so close to my people I can smell their cooking, but I can't shake the hand of my father."

Jahangir, who was killed by unidentified gunmen at his home in the Punjab city of Jhang, was best known as a Sunni Muslim activist who campaigned against minority Shia Muslims.

In Rawalpindi, police guards were posted around Shia mosques to prevent reprisal attacks.

"We have seen reports on the effect that France has cleared the sale of a nuclear power plant to Pakistan. Anything which has the effect of strengthening or expanding the weapons-orientation and clandestine nature of Pakistan's nuclear programme is a matter of concern to us," said a statement read by the Foreign Ministry spokesman.

"Our concern with regard to the sale of the French power plant has been brought to the attention of France," he added.

When it was pointed out that India has purchased a French-made nuclear plant and is contemplating an offer to buy two more, the spokesman replied:

"Our plants are not weapons-oriented and not clandestine."

In Islamabad, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said that the United States should not be concerned about France's decision to sell Pakistan a nuclear power plant.

The US State Department criticised the decision to make the sale without requiring Pakistan to comply with international safeguards on its nuclear programmes.

"We believe that a full-scope safeguard requirement would have made a much more significant contribution to strengthening international non-proliferation efforts in general, and in the south Asian region in particular," the statement released in Washington said.

The Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesman repeated his government's oft-stated promise not to produce a nuclear weapon and told a news conference, "the United States reaction to the French decision to sell Pakistan a nuclear power plant is not well-founded."

Mitterrand's approval of the nuclear plant for Pakistan provoked a storm of protest from environmentalists in Paris, and a US official said Washington would keep a close watch on the deal.

The French Greens Party said in a statement yesterday that undeveloped Pakistan had no need of a nuclear industry. "This country — whose population shot from 64.3 million in 1970 to 105.4 in 1988 — needs pills, not the atomic bomb," it added.

Ronald Lehman, director of the US arms control and disarmament agency, told a satellite news conference yesterday the United States was not opposed to the peaceful use of nuclear power but added: "We have concerns about the possibility of an arms race in South Asia and we are urging restraint."

"We will be watching this extremely closely," Lehman said in Washington.

The Paris daily Le Monde quoted a US spokesman as saying Islamabad had offered France insufficient safeguards.

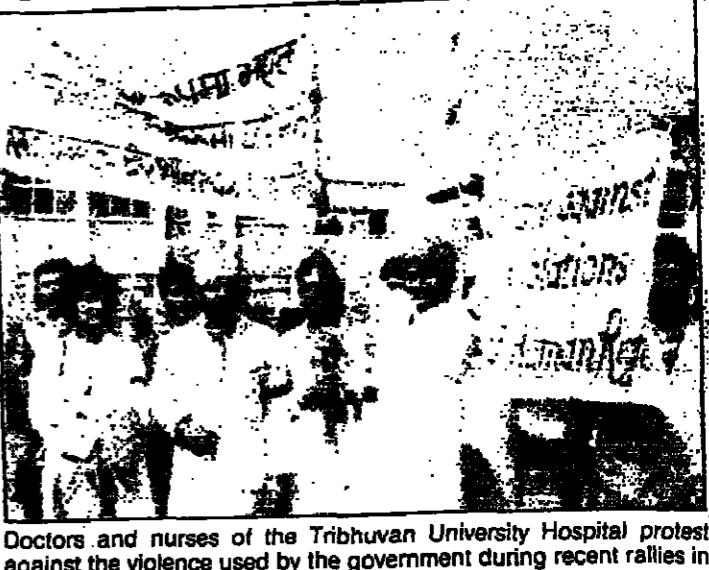
Pakistan scholar gunned down

ISLAMABAD, Feb 23, (Reuters): Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto condemned today the killing of an Islamic scholar who led a militant anti-Shia Muslim organisation.

She said the people who gunned down Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi yesterday were bent on stirring up discontent and hatred between Pakistan's religious sects.

Jhangvi, who was killed by unidentified gunmen at his home in the Punjab city of Jhang, was best known as a Sunni Muslim activist who campaigned against minority Shia Muslims.

In Rawalpindi, police guards were posted around Shia mosques to prevent reprisal attacks.



Doctors and nurses of the Tribhuvan University Hospital protest against the violence used by the government during recent rallies in Kathmandu. (Reuter wirephoto)

Nepalis allege police atrocities

Opposition rejects talks

KATHMANDU, Feb 23, (Agencies): Nepalis, peasants, artisans and students spoke today of chaotic arrests, beatings in detention and deaths in three days of anti-government protests this week.

Some 40 people, ranging from a 14-year-old boy in T-shirt and jeans to middle-aged peasant women wrapped in blankets against the Himalayan winter, crowded into a dilapidated common room at a Kathmandu university to address a news conference.

Speaking through an interpreter from the human rights organisation of Nepal, some alleged they had been rounded up and beaten arbitrarily before and during the protests at Kathmandu. The protests launched on Sunday a campaign for open political activity.

A government spokesman, asked to comment on the allegation, suggested some of those at the news conference might have exaggerated.

"When someone is detained they get angry," he said.

The police are also human. When they receive violence from demonstrators, it is natural for them to get angry. But they are not supposed to beat them (detainees), he said.

The government said 11 people died in the clashes earlier this week, when it said police were forced to open fire in self-defence against stone-throwing demonstrators.

Transport worker Shyam Kumar Shrestha said he was among about 400 bystanders, hawkers and demonstrators arrested amid the confusion in the bazaars of old Kathmandu.

"I asked why I was being arrested, because I was not demonstrating," Shrestha said.

"I was told: 'That doesn't concern you'."

Shrestha said his group was held first at a police recreation club, then a traffic police headquarters, where they were divided into categories.

Most groups were beaten, but he was not, he said. "We obeyed all the orders and commands."

The second, in Nepali, said: "We pray for the eternal peace of those souls killed by the government."

The government spokesman said he would try to find out what happened to the body.

One, in English, said: "Medics against violations of human rights."

The second, in Nepali, said:

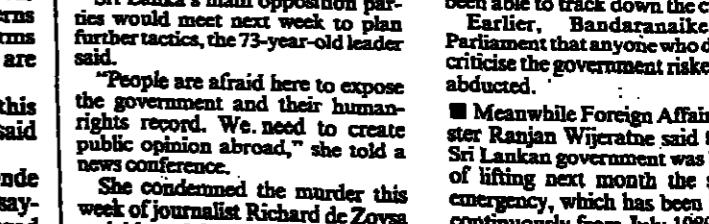
"We pray for the eternal peace of those souls killed by the government."

The government spokesman said he was killed because he wrote extensively about human rights abuses.

She said that in the past few years thousands of Sri Lankans had been killed but the government had not been able to track down the culprits.

Earlier, Bandaranaike told Parliament that anyone who dared to criticise the government risked being abducted.

Meanwhile Foreign Affairs Minister Ranjan Wijeratne said the Sri Lankan government was hopeful of lifting next month the state of emergency, which has been in force continuously from July 1989, as the overall situation in the country was fast improving.



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INTERNATIONAL

ARAB TIMES, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1990

Wins 4: 'Wake me up when this is over'

Raitt from obscurity to Grammy awards

LOS ANGELES, Feb 23, (AP): Rock survivor Bonnie Raitt, who has toiled in the vineyards of obscurity since the 1960s, won four Grammy awards Wednesday including Album of the Year, for her critically acclaimed "Nick Of Time" album.

"I can only take so much of this," said Raitt, accepting her fourth award, female pop vocalist. "Wake me up when this is over."

"Wind Beneath My Wings," a ballad performed by two-time

Grammy winner Bette Midler and written by Larry Henley and Jeff

Silbar, won record of the year and song of the year.

"This record's my first No. 1," Midler said to the audience at the 32nd annual Grammy awards show. "I had to wait 17 years for it. I hope I don't have to wait another 17."

Raitt also won female rock vocalist and shared the traditional blues award with John Lee Hooker for "I'm in the Mood" on Hooker's "The Healer" album.

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Soul II Soul won the rhythm and blues group performance for the single "Back To Life," and the R-and-B instrumental Grammys for the "African Dance" track from their "Keep On Movin'" album.

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Grusin won three Grammys, for the background score of the movie "The Fabulous Baker Boys," instrumental arrangement for the suite from "The Milagro Beanfield War" and arrangement with vocals for the "My Funny Valentine" track from "Baker Boys."

Brother and sister Michael and Janet Jackson won back-to-back music video trophies.

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Living Colour won for hard rock group for the single, "Cult Of Personality." Metallica's single "One" earned best heavy metal performance.

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Trump flashes the victory sign. (Reuter wirephoto)

Reagan can't recall

Hazy on Iran-Contra details

WASHINGTON, Feb 24, (Agencies): The witness was unable. He took the oath, pledging to tell the truth, took the stand, winked at the defendant, stated his name, spelled it out, "Ronald R-e-s-p-o-n-s-i-b-l-e," and said he used to be in politics and before that in the movies and "prior to that I was a sports announcer in radio."

But in his command performance for the cameras of the court, former president Ronald Reagan had trouble remembering.

Dates. Pictures. Documents. Memoirs. Aides. Meetings. "I, to this day, do not recall ever hearing that there was a diversion. No one has proven to me that there was a diversion," the former president said in videotaped testimony released yesterday in the criminal case of former national security adviser John Poindexter.

Often answering "I don't recall" to questions, Reagan said Poindexter, a key aide, never discussed with him details of the arms sales to Iran.

Reagan also said he was unaware of a false chronology about Iran-Contra events and that he assumed his administration abided by the law banning aid to the rebels, known as Contras.

Reagan is 79 years old now, and some of the events he

was questioned about during a videotaped deposition last week on the Iran-Contra affair took place years ago. He has always denied directing them.

"There were so many meetings and so many different places," he said on the witness stand.

"I know it is tough, Mr President," said lawyer Richard Becker.

Asked if he had dispatched John Vesey to Central America, Reagan had trouble identifying Vesey, who served as chairman of the joint chiefs of staff from June 1982 to September 1985.

Counsel: "Could you explain to the members of the jury who General Vesey was?"

Reagan: "Oh, dear, I could ask for help here. The name I know is very familiar. I am wondering if ..."

Counsel: "This is in connection with a trip by the joint chiefs of staff."

Reagan: "Well, that — I don't — I don't think this was my military aide, but obviously he was in a position to do this if he was the chief of staff."

During the questioning in his videotaped deposition last week Reagan was treated with deference. "Mr President," he was called.

Most infant car seats are approved by the

Ivana, ex-hubby are still friends

LONDON, Feb 23, (AP): Ivana Trump's Austrian-born first husband sells real estate in Australia and says he and his former wife are still friends, the Daily Mail reported today.

The British tabloid, in what it said was an exclusive story, reported it had found Alfred Winklmayr in the beach side Sydney suburb of Collaroy and printed what it said was the first picture of him.

The story by reporter Richard Stears in Sydney said Winklmayr migrated to Australia after what it called the marriage of convenience ended in the 1970s without being consummated.

It quoted Winklmayr as saying: "We are still friends. I've been trying to follow events but it's not easy to keep up with everything this far away. She's certainly come a long way since I knew her."

"Ivana's been receiving a lot of criticism lately but I can tell you she's not the kind of person to take it without a fight."

On Wednesday, Mrs Trump's lawyer, Michael Kennedy, revealed at a news conference in New York that the wife of billionaire developer Donald Trump was married briefly in the early 1970s to Winklmayr, who was then a ski instructor. Mrs Trump is former world-class skier.

Kennedy said she married Winklmayr in 1971 and described it as a "cold war marriage" that allowed her to travel under an Austrian passport out of communist Czechoslovakia, her homeland. Kennedy said they were divorced in 1973.

"They never slept together. They never lived together," Kennedy said. She said Winklmayr was 25 and Mrs Trump 22 when they married. Kennedy said this latest revelation since Trump announced he was leaving his wife of 12 years came in response to "inaccurate" reports in British tabloids.

A report yesterday in the London tabloid the Sun said Winklmayr was 60 when he wed Mrs Trump and described him as a rich industrialist. It said he died within two years of the marriage, leaving her enough money to finance "a new life in Canada," where she moved in 1972.

The Daily Mail said Winklmayr chuckled over his reported death and it quoted him as saying: "Unfortunately I am not a rich industrialist." The paper said that in fact trying to sell houses is one of the toughest jobs in Sydney at present and that many of his contemporaries face ruin because of crippling mortgage rates.

It said Winklmayr lives in a modest apartment in a middle class suburb.

Panait wife still in a fix

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida, Feb 23, (UPI): Now that Nadia Comaneci has rejected marriage with the Romanian roofer who helped her defect, his estranged wife isn't sure what she wants him either.

Constantin Panait, 36, left his wife and their four children in Hallandale, Florida, Nov. 2 and was not heard from again until a month later, when he appeared on American national television with Comaneci.

Panait said he planned to stay with Comaneci and said the two might marry. But the Olympic gold medal gymnast said in Tokyo Tuesday that she had never loved Panait.

Comaneci, 28, said she planned to marry Romanian computer programmer Mihai Vasilescu, 30, whom she described as her "best friend," in about three months.



Ortega holds his two and a half-year-old daughter Camilia, as she holds up five fingers corresponding to the party's number five position on ballot slips. (Reuter wirephoto)



Chamorro listens to Organisation of American States (OAS) Secretary-General Joao Baena. (Reuter wirephoto)

Respect vote, review ties

Ortega urges US

MANAGUA, Feb 23, (Reuters): President Daniel Ortega, branding Washington's Nicaragua policy a failure, urged the United States yesterday to respect a Sandinista election victory and establish normal relations with the new government.

Ortega, speaking at a news conference, ruled out the possibility that his ruling Sandinistas were prepared to discuss with the US government any questions that affected US security in Central America.

US Secretary of State James Baker told a congressional committee in Washington yesterday that the United States would not necessarily accept the elections as fair, even if neutral observers certified the poll.

Washington would only improve ties with Nicaragua after Managua refrained from subverting their neighbours, Baker said — a reference to arms Nicaragua is alleged to have sent to left-wing rebels fighting the government of El Salvador.

"When the Sandinista Front triumphs, we expect that President Bush sticks to his word and normalizes relations," Ortega said. "We hope there will be a new chapter in relations between the United States and Nicaragua."

The leftist Sandinistas are competing against an alliance of right and centre parties led by publisher Violeta Chamorro.

Bush promises to restore common sense, fairness to US medicine

BALTIMORE, Feb 23, (AP): US President George Bush promised yesterday to help find ways "to restore common sense and fairness" to the medical malpractice system, and urged physicians to provide more free care for the needy.

Bush made the twin promise and appeal in a speech at the centennial celebration of one of America's premier medical schools, the Johns Hopkins University.

Despite devoting more than 11 per cent of its Gross National Product to health care — "American

medicine still faces unprecedented problems," Bush said.

These maladies, he said, include medical malpractice, the plight of the 37 million Americans with no health insurance, the AIDS epidemic, drug addiction, an aging population and other conditions with "staggering" costs.

Despite spending \$600 billion a year on health care, the United States trails other industrialized countries in life expectancy and ranks 22nd in the developed world in infant mortality, the president said.

Bush noted that he had instructed Health

FAA asked to take tougher stand

Airlines favour infant seats

WASHINGTON, Feb 23, (AP): The airline industry changed its position on infant safety seats yesterday and asked the government to require them for all passengers under 2 years old.

The proposal, if adopted by the Federal Aviation Administration, could require thousands of parents each day to buy tickets for children who now fly free. Airlines, however, still would have the option of offering free rides or reducing fares.

The air transport association, representing major air carriers, prepared a petition asking

the FAA to take a tougher stand than the agency is considering. The airlines group previously encouraged infant seat use but opposed rules to require them.

FAA rules now allow infants to be held in the arms of adult passengers, but recent crashes in which unsecured infants were killed while some other passengers escaped have raised new concerns among passenger groups, flight attendants and members of Congress.

Most infant car seats are approved by the

FAA for airlines use.

The FAA is considering a rule that would require airlines to accept safety seats on all flights. Airlines now have the option to refuse them.

The FAA has resisted calls for tougher rules, partly because of the cost to parents and the low number of infant casualties in airplane accidents. Some officials have argued that raising costs so families would drive rather than fly with infants would subject them to greater risk than flying without an infant seat.

First fat substitute passed by FDA

NEW YORK, Feb 23, (AP): It's cold, wet, creamy and sweet on the tongue. It's thicker than top super-premium ice cream brands, and just a little bit harder to scrape with your spoon.

It doesn't taste exactly like Haagen-Dazs ice cream, but what do you expect for a product with half the calories and one-fifteenth the fat?

Nutrasweet Co., the maker of nutrasweet low-calorie sweetener, is hoping for a mouthful with Simple Pleasures, a super-premium ice cream substitute with no fat and low calories.

Its secret lies in Simplese, a product made from egg whites and milk protein that has no cholesterol and no fat. Simplese eventually may be used as a substitute for other dairy products like yogurt, sour cream, butter, margarine and cheese, the company predicts.

Simple Pleasures was unveiled for reporters yesterday, after becoming the first fat-substitute product to win approval from the US Food and Drug Administration.

The real taste test will come this summer when it shows up in seven flavours in supermarkets across the United States. Distribution in Europe is expected by the end of the year, said Simplese general manager David L. Morely.

"It's potentially very significant. This is the first non-fat fat, so to speak, to be approved on the market," said Harvey Stober, a chemical analyst for Dean Witter Reynolds Inc., who said sales could grow to \$500 million or 1 billion a year in several years.

Monsanto stock jumped higher following the FDA approval, finishing \$4.37 \$1.2 higher at \$112.25 on the New York Stock Exchange.

Simplese is aimed at consumers who want to cut the amount of fat and cholesterol in their diet without satisfying their craving for sweets.

An executive with a US oil company said employees have been prohibited from travelling outside Bogota because of the guerrilla threat.

US embassy employees in Bogota were warned Wednesday to suspend unnecessary trips outside their homes and were taking to and from work by armed guards, an embassy employee told the Associated Press.

The US State Department already had considered Colombia so dangerous that it limited posts to single people or married people willing to live without their families.

The diplomats get hazardous duty pay for working in Colombia.

In the past the US embassy had said there were an estimated 20,000 US citizens in Colombia, but there are no firm figures.

Surgery corrects myopia

CHICAGO, Feb 23, (AP): Two-thirds of people who had eye surgery to correct their nearsightedness were able to see without glasses four years later, but doctors still can't predict the outcome of the costly operation, a US study says.

"Our study and others have demonstrated fairly well that there are some adverse outcomes, but they are relatively rare," said John Carter, co-ordinator of the study, based at Emory University in Atlanta.

The surgery, known as radial keratotomy, isainless and can be performed on an outpatient basis. It involves making cuts in the cornea in a pattern resembling spokes of a wheel. The purpose of the procedure, introduced in 1976, is to reduce the cornea's curvature. It costs about \$2,000 an eye, Carter said.

For four years, researchers tracked 390 patients who underwent the surgery on one eye between March 1982 and October 1983. Visual sharpness was improved to better than 20-20 in 76 per cent of eyes, the researchers reported.

Morparians — 69 percent of the patients — had visual sharpness of 20-20 or worse before the operation, and none had sharpness better than 20-20. The researchers reported in today's journal of the American Medical Association.

"The eyes look good and we expect her to recover promptly," he said. (AP)

and Stormie's hepatic artery. Part of the connection had given way.

"She had bleeding from one of her suture lines, the arterial suture line," said Dr Andreas Tzakis, the surgeon who headed the operation. "We fixed it by reconstructing the arterial blood supply to the liver."

Tzakis said he remained optimistic about Stormie's recovery.

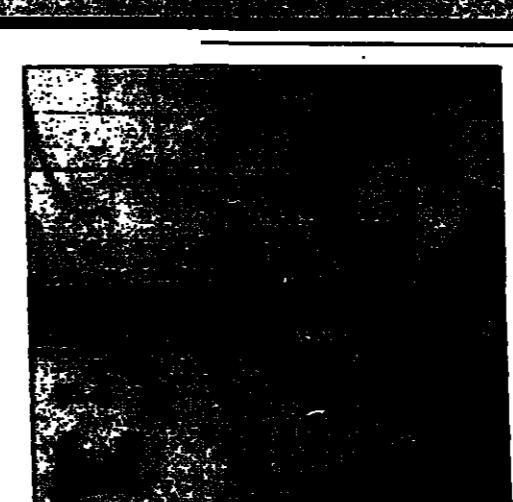
"The liver looks good and we expect her to recover promptly," he said. (AP)

But eleven patients who had 20-20 vision or better with corrective lenses before the surgery suffered a significant loss of visual sharpness after the procedure, even with glasses or contact lenses, they reported.

Infections developed in two patients, who were successfully treated with antibiotics without vision loss, Carter said in a telephone interview yesterday.

Among the 323 patients who had both eyes operated on, 64 per cent said they wore no corrective lenses four years after the surgery, the researchers said.

"It is generally thought to be a safe procedure — and effective — and it does result in the reduction of myopia," said Carter, who has a doctorate in physics.



Medical care in GDR

Rita Submuth (right) president of the West German parliament is watching a premature baby in an incubator, in East Berlin on Feb 22. Mrs Submuth is visiting the East Berlin hospital "Friedrichshain" in order to get informed about the situation of medical care in East-German hospitals. (Reuter wirephoto)

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INTERNATIONAL

Ariane blows up after liftoff

\$430 million disaster

KOUROU, French Guiana, Feb 23, (AP): Ariane space is suspending all future missions after an Ariane 44-L rocket exploded just after liftoff, destroying two Japanese telecommunications satellites aboard in a \$430-million disaster.

The rocket, powered by four strap-on boosters, blew apart last night from an apparent fire in the propulsion system, Ariane space president Frederic d'Allest said.

"We will have some primary indications this morning," d'Allest said. Ariane space scheduled a news conference at the launching site in French Guiana for 9 am local time (1200 GMT) to be broadcast simultaneously at its headquarters in Evry, France.

"The launch was a failure," d'Allest said at the launch site. "All Ariane flights are suspended until we discover the reason of this accident. We are going to analyse this failure and explain the catastrophe of this flight as rapidly as possible."

Witnesses who saw the flight on the video monitors at Evry said flames appeared to break out in the first stage of the rocket before it was due to detach at 2 minutes, 30 seconds into the flight.

**Stage debut**

Model Julie Anne Rhodes (left), wife of Duran Duran star Nick Rhodes made her stage debut when she appeared in 'Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner' at the Man in the Moon pub theatre in London's King's Road Feb 22. With Rhodes is her co-star, actress Priscilla Phillips. (Reuter wirephoto)

Galaxies clumped in regular pattern

NEW YORK, Feb 23, (AP): A new study has found that galaxies are clumped in a regular pattern over a vast scale, a finding that would challenge current theories about the universe if verified.

"To find the regularity is just mind-boggling," said study co-author David Koo of the University of California, Santa Cruz.

But another scientist familiar with the study said he believes the findings are merely a statistical fluke rather than a real pattern.

"This is so counter to our notions (about the universe) that I'm going to treat it sceptically unless it's really proven conclusively," said Marc Davis of the University of California, Berkeley.

None of the accepted theories about the universe includes a periodic structure like the one the researchers report, Davis said.

The new work is presented in Thursday's issue of the British journal *Nature* by Koo, Alexander Szalay of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and researchers in England.

They surveyed galaxies in two opposite directions from the Milky Way galaxy, which includes Earth.

Within these narrow lines of sight, researchers found about a dozen clumps of galaxies, separated by approximately evenly spaced gaps of 400 million to 900 million light-years, Koo said.

A light-year is the distance light travels in a year, about 5.88 trillion miles (9.46 trillion kilometres).

The calculated distance between clumps depends on one's assumptions about how fast the universe is expanding.

The gaps were not completely empty of galaxies. The Milky Way, for example, resides between two clumps in about the middle of the overall series observed by the researchers, he said.

Koo said it was surprising to find clumpiness at all over such a large scale, and that the regularity was even more surprising. Researchers are now looking elsewhere to see if the regularity shows up again, he said.

If the pattern is proven, it would force a "revamping" or abandonment of currently popular theories about the development of the universe, he said.

Davis agreed that the proven existence of such a pattern would "clearly require new physics. It is totally outside the domain of any physics we have thought of."

"My guess is that when people try to reproduce this survey in different directions (in the sky), they won't see any periodic structure," he said.

America

Flag burning charges dismissed: Attorneys for three flag-burners urged a federal judge Thursday to follow the lead of a federal court in Seattle and strike down a law Congress passed to prohibit flag desecration.

Judge Barbara Rothstein ruled in Seattle Wednesday that the new federal law is unconstitutional and dismissed flag-burning charges against four demonstrators. Federal prosecutors said they may appeal the ruling to the supreme court.

Some members of Congress said the Seattle decision showed that Congress didn't do enough last autumn in passing legislation to outlaw flag burning. and should now amend the constitution to ban flag-burning. . . .

Man who bit passers-by had AIDS: A man who went berserk on a city street in Miami and bit at least eight people before he collapsed and died was suffering from AIDS, police said Wednesday, and they encouraged his victims to call health authorities. Experts say there are no known instances of AIDS being transmitted by biting, but police said they were issuing the appeal as a precaution.

The incident occurred Feb 7 when Jean Marc Rosier, 26, who gave his address as a homeless shelter, began attacking passersby, said police spokesman Ray Lang.

At least four people were bitten seriously enough to be hospitalized, including some who had flaps of skin hanging off arms and faces. (AP)

**See, no hands**

US Tony Melendez, 27, plays a guitar with his bare feet for Pope John Paul II during an audience at the Vatican Feb 21. Melendez was born in Nicaragua without arms as a result of his mother's seen at centre, taking Thalidomide, a drug prescribed for pregnant women that caused the birth of hundreds of deformed children. (Reuter wirephoto)

Brake problems

Jaguar recall

DETROIT, Feb 23, (AP): Jaguar Pk, the luxury British automaker dogged by an image of slippage quality, is recalling nearly every car it has sold in the United States since the 1983 model year because of potential brake problems.

The 38,315 models affected contain a high-pressure hose that could rupture and spurt hot brake fluid onto an engine, causing smoke, fire and loss of braking power, the automaker said. The brake recall also affects 56,000 Jaguars sold in other countries.

In addition, Jaguar said it is recalling 38,385 cars sold in this country dating to 1979 for defects that could cause the automatic cruise control device to jam, raising the risk of crashes.

May" won't happen again. Slim-dwellers reacting to months of rampant inflation reportedly looted food stores and drug stores. The government news agency Telam said. But by late afternoon, the Interior Ministry described the city, 185 miles (300 kilometres) north of Buenos Aires, as "absolutely normal."

Nine months ago during a similar period of hyperinflation and recession, looting in Rosario and other cities turned into food riots and clashes with police. The violence left 16 people dead, nearly 200 were injured and more than 1,700 under arrest.

Charles chuckles over charges of 'architect-bashing'

WASHINGTON, Feb 23, (Reuter): Britain's Prince Charles joked about his reputation as an "architect-basher" at an architecture gala, but got serious when it came to defending his plea for more traditional buildings.

"I read in the newspapers ... that architects were queuing up to be bashed by the prince — apparently architect-bashing is my second favourite sport to polo," he told 1,200 guests at the American Institute of Architects awards ceremony in Washington last evening.

Entertainers Tom Selleck, Brooke Shields and Joan Rivers, as well as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Jack Kemp and House of

Representatives Speaker Tom Foley, were among the celebrities who attended.

Earlier in the day, the prince had lunch with President George Bush and Vice-President Dan Quayle.

Prince Charles believes in contextualism in architecture, the notion that buildings should fit in with their surroundings and enrich the lives of those who live and work in them.

"Ours may be an age of vast wealth, but what can we see of it? It sometimes seems to me that the richer we get, the uglier we tend to make our surroundings," he said.



Captain's sore throat delays Atlantis launch

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida, Feb 23, (AP): The National Aeronautics and Space Administration yesterday delayed the launch of the space shuttle Atlantis for a second day to let the shuttle's commander recover from a sore throat and to await better weather.

The secret military mission to put a spy satellite in orbit is not expected to take off until next morning at the earliest.

The shuttle originally was scheduled for pre-dawn liftoff yesterday but was postponed Wednesday when Navy Capt. John O. Creighton became ill, the second time the space programme has delayed a flight because of a sick astronaut.

Nasa delayed the launch yet another day on the recommendation of doctors examining Creighton, who complained of a sore throat and congestion.

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Gum, tips for smokers

CHICAGO, Feb 23, (Reuter): When cigarette-smoking airline passengers arrive at Chicago's O'Hare international airport on Sunday they will be handed chewing gum, mints and mouthwash to survive a rude shock — the beginning of a smoking ban on almost all US flights.

The Chicago Lung Association said it will hand out hundreds of "survival kits" to passengers with things to chew on and tips on how to survive the trip to St Thomas, San Juan or Acapulco without tobacco.

Similar efforts ranging from friendly advice to written tip sheets will be offered at airports around the country by local affiliates of the American Lung Association.

Smoking will still be allowed on foreign-carrier flights to or from the United States and US-flag flights abroad, but foreign airlines will have to observe the smoke-free law on flights between US cities.

The law was passed by Congress last year to replace a 1988 smoking ban on US flights of two hours or less.

The Chicago Lung Association said its survival kits will include sugar-free gum, mints and mouthwash as well as advice which ranges from eating full meals and snacking on sugar-laden food to drinking caffeinated coffee. When the urge to light up comes, smokers will be told to take a deep breath, chew on a toothpick or straw and read out a crossword puzzle.

Medical experts have announced plans for an educational campaign aimed at stopping the use of snuff and chewing tobacco among young people.

The American Academy of Otolaryngology-head and Neck Surgery Inc. said the "threw with chew week" campaign is designed to educate teenagers about the health risks of smokeless tobacco — including life-threatening cancers of the mouth and throat.

FAA administrator James Busey was toned down to be less critical of FAA controllers.

The letter said the board was still investigating the crash and "has not concluded that any specific communication or co-ordination problems" caused the accident.

It said, however, that Flight 52 pilots should have declared a "fuel emergency" and air controllers should have asked them to clarify their condition when they repeatedly said they were running out of fuel, the board said.

Although transcripts of the flight recorder have not been made public, the letter to Busey provided some details of the Avianca pilots' appeals to controllers who were handling their flight. The Boeing 707 airliner was delayed three different times for a total of 77 minutes because of heavy traffic over the east coast.

The letter said the crew used "non-standard phraseology" in telling controllers that the plane was low on fuel. Among statements quoted were: "We'll try once again, we're running out of fuel," "we just running out of fuel," and "we just lost two engines and we need priority please."

Taiwan premier speech stalled

TAIPEI, Feb 23. (Reuters): Taiwan's premier endured an unprecedented insult today as lawmakers from the island's feisty opposition party kept him waiting more than six hours to give his state-of-the-nation speech.

The obstruction marked new confidence among members of the fledgling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which almost doubled its strength in Parliament in December parliamentary elections.

Riot police packed the area around the Parliament building in central Taipei to guard against a repeat of violent rioting on Tuesday, but no demonstrators appeared and the fireworks were confined to the legislative floor.

DPP deputies challenging the right of Premier Lee Huan to deliver the speech, yelled, unfurled banners and wrestled with Nationalist Party delegates for control of the microphone.

Nationalist legislators hissed, banged tables and pulled out their own banners to protest against the filibuster, and later some 60 members of the ruling party staged a brief walk-out.

"What is this? Are you the only members of parliament here? Are we not members too? Or are we just fools?" Jaw Shao-kang, a young Nationalist Party firebrand, shouted at the opposition.

Lee was prevented five times from taking the podium by the chaos on the floor. He finally gave his speech in the late afternoon.

He told the deputies who had kept him waiting since 9 am "to pay more attention to democracy."

"It doesn't matter if you are KMT (Nationalist Party), DPP or independent. We all must work together for the government," Lee told the chamber.

DPP legislators said Lee had no right to give his speech until he had been approved as premier by the new parliament.

The DPP increased its seats in the 281-seat parliament to 21 from 12 in the December elections, the first in which it was allowed to participate as a legal political party.

An octogenarian lawmaker of the ruling Nationalist Party has died one day after fainting during a riot in which protesters called on him and other elderly legislators to step down.

Chiang Kung-Liang, an 82-year-old retired general, died Wednesday evening at the National Taiwan University Hospital.

Chiang, who had been hospitalised for a year with asthma, fainted during the year's opening session of the lawmaking legislative Yuan on Tuesday to vote for a new speaker.

MANILA, Feb 23. (Reuters): Four years after ousting a dictator in a show of "people power", the Philippines has become Asia's most fragile democracy, a deeply divided country struggling to find its future.

Frey to army coup attempt, the Pacific nation of 60 million people faces crucial decisions as President Corazon Aquino heads into the last two years of her turbulent term.

Mutinous soldiers continue to plot to overthrow her while politicians have begun

jockeying for position for a shot at the presidency in 1992, assuming the army does not take power before then.

"The government can't seem to get off the ground with all the breakdown in public services, divisions in the military, graft and corruption," said Adrian Cristobal, a political analyst and once spokesman for the late President Ferdinand Marcos. "Things could get worse and the solution may be violent."

Aquino was swept to power on a wave of

hope on February 25, 1986 when hundreds of thousands of Filipinos, backing a small band of army rebels, massed on Manila's Edsa highway in a popular uprising that ended Marcos' 20-year rule.

But in the four years Aquino has been in office, little has changed in a political system that elite, conservative families have dominated for generations. Half the country lives in poverty and there is a communist insurgency.

A rubber-stamp national assembly that

gave the Marcos regime a flimsy democratic facade has given way to a congress ruled by traditional politicians resistant to change.

The judicial system continues to favour the rich while investor confidence in the economy has been battered by six army coup attempts.

Many Filipinos agree US military intervention in the last army insurgency in December saved Aquino from downfall.

A chief Aquino supporter, the United States is concerned about stability in a coun-

try that hosts two strategic American military bases.

Army rebels, promising reforms, have said they will try again, vowing that Aquino will not finish her term.

Despite Aquino's repeated declarations that she will not seek re-election, some aides say she is keeping her options open.

One factor that could push her to run again is the possible candidacy of her estranged cousin, Eduardo Cojuangco, a powerful

industrialist during the Marcos government and a former top ally of Marcos.

Analysts said Aquino might perceive a Cojuangco presidential bid as reviving vestiges of the Marcos era which she has vowed to stamp out.

"While the president may be sincere in saying that she's not going to run, there are institutional impulses within the executive which might force her to run or create circumstances in which she will run," said political scientist Rex Loreo.



Mr Zero-Population-Growth pictured in his hometown of Wollongong. (Reuters wirephoto)

Push for death

Zero campaigns

SYDNEY, Feb 23. (Reuters): War, drink, driving, cigarette smoking and a cut in AIDS research will help solve Australia's economic woes.

Well, that's the political platform one Wollongong candidate is putting forward ahead of the March 24 election.

"They are the ones we have to knock off," he said. An increase in road deaths would also boost industry, which would have to produce more replacement cars and buses for those destroyed in road crashes.

Zero said he would oppose any increase in defence spending as Australia's defence forces are too timid.

"The army, navy and air force here don't kill anyone. I'd look at starting a good war with Indonesia or Papua New Guinea," he said.

Coupled with an increased death rate, Australia should also cut its migrant intake and birthrate by 100,000.

If all child subsidies and education funding were abolished then tax rates could be cut by half, he reasons.

"The government would not be interfering in the bedroom, you can have as many kids as you like so long as you pay for them," he said.

Zero needs 300,000 votes, 14 per cent of the total vote in New South Wales, to gain a seat.

He doesn't give himself much chance.

country's lung cancer rate, and legalise drink driving.

"We should allow cigarette advertising back on television and encourage people to drink and drive because road carnage kills young people before they have children," said Zero.

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In his speech, Cheney also had a message for Washington lawmakers, saying, "it would be a mistake" to reduce the US presence in Asia just because of the lessening of tensions in Europe.

America must "look at the region on its own terms," Cheney said.

The Soviet Union hasn't acted to reduce tensions in Asia as it has in Europe, Cheney said, calling on Moscow to help calm the region's flashpoints.

"I would welcome Soviet acts that would contribute genuinely to a reduction of tensions in the Asia-Pacific region," he said.

He said any US troop reductions would be made without demands for "a reciprocal Soviet reduction."

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INTERNATIONAL

ARAB TIMES, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1990

Don't have kids, N-plant workers told

SELLAFIELD, England, Feb 23, (AP): Some workers at the Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant may be counseled not to have children because higher than expected rates of leukemia have been found among employee's children, the company's safety director said.

However, the company later said it was up to the workers to decide.

"Workers who want individual counseling can get it and if they are so worried the advice could be: 'Don't have children.' It is not something, however, that I hope would be widespread advice," said Dr. Roger Berry, health and safety director for British Nuclear Fuels

Ltd., the operator of the plant.

British nuclear fuels later issued a statement saying that advising workers not to have families "is not company policy."

A research team headed by Martin Gardner, professor of medical studies at the University of Southampton, reported in last week's British medical journal that children of men who worked at the plant had a higher than expected rate of leukemia.

British nuclear fuels said the company had promised medical counselling for all employees to ensure they understood the report and the risks to them if its findings are confirmed.

"Ultimately, it is then for each individual worker to reach a decision, not for the company to advise on one course of action or another," it said.

Gardner met with workers at the plant in northern England on Wednesday, and later said he was urging British nuclear fuels to study whether it was possible to minimize radiation exposures of younger workers.

"These would be the sort of people who were still capable of having families and may prefer not working in higher radiation levels," said Gardner, who added that he did not wish to overstate the risks involved.

"The risk of a child in this country getting leukemia is one in 2,000, while those whose fathers were exposed to the highest radiation levels is about seven in 2,000, or one in 300."

Gardner reported that the main finding of his study was that the risk was highest for fathers who had received total exposure in excess of 100 millisieverts.

■ A full scale search of beaches on the south coast of England was underway yesterday morning after cans containing a deadly poison were washed ashore overnight.

UK lifts SA ban: Maggie defiant

LONDON, Feb 23, (Agencies): Britain lifted a ban on new investment in South Africa today as Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher dismissed suggestions Britain stood isolated by calling out of concert with its European Community partners.

Present to comment on the British move, Thatcher sounded defiant after talks with Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti.

"I am accused of being out of step and isolated. It is pretty cosy isolation, pretty crowded, judging by the numbers of foreign statesmen who are talking to us. It is very cosy and very crowded being isolated if that is the right word, which it is not," she told a news conference, her tone slightly mocking.

Brussels was alone at this week's EEC foreign ministers' meeting in Dublin when it condemned the Thatcher government's decision to break ranks and lift voluntary sanctions imposed against South Africa in 1986.

The unilateral move was the first step by any country to relax sanctions against Pretoria in response to South African President F.W. de Klerk's reforms and the freeing of black nationalist leader Nelson Mandela.

Organisers of Sunday's rally in Moscow have received permission to gather, and the official Soviet news agency Tass quoted Vladimir Kamchatov of the electorate's association as predicting that up to 300,000 people might turn out.

Demonstrations are planned in a number of provincial cities across the vast Russian republic, which stretches from Finland to the Sea of Japan.

The gatherings come just before March 4 elections to choose members of the Russian republic's legislatures. Elections also are scheduled that day in the Ukraine and Byelorussia.

West Germany is a member of Nato, and the western alliance has more than 300,000 troops in the country, about 250,000 of them American. East Germany belongs to the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact, and about 300,000 Soviet soldiers are stationed in East Germany.

Hoffmann said the armed forces of a future joint German army should initially be reduced to about 300,000 men, and later cut to between 150,000 and 200,000 soldiers.

Gen. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, West Germany's representative at the Vienna troop reduction talks, said any troop strength for a united Germany over 300,000 men "would cause security concerns of our neighbours, especially France and Poland."

West Germany has 490,000 troops. East German officials say its armed forces have shrunk from 170,000 to 100,000 men in recent months.

Talks with the West German military on merging the two countries' armed forces could begin soon after the East German government is elected following the country's first free elections on March 18, Hoffmann said.

Meanwhile, leading dissident expelled from Romania five years ago accused the interim government of being undemocratic and said he was still being followed by secret police.

East German Defence Minister

approved a proposal Feb 7 to renounce the communists' monopoly on power, paving the way for a multiparty system.

Many of the rallies are being organised by citizens' Popular Front movements, which have been pushing for greater political freedom during the past two years.

But the Central Committee has urged citizens to stay away from the new demonstrations. In television and radio broadcast yesterday and again today, the policy-making body of the party urged Soviet citizens to oppose attempts to create "chaos."

Earlier in the week, the Soviet legislature issued a decree calling on local authorities to crack down on illegal protests on Sunday and to strictly control those demonstrations that are permitted.

The Supreme Soviet decree allows only officially sanctioned rallies to take place, and already groups in the Uzbekistan capital of Tashkent have been denied permission to hold an outdoor gathering, although an indoor meeting will be allowed.

Leningrad activists were denied a request to stage a march and instead will hold a rally at a sports complex.

Organisers of Sunday's rally in Moscow have received permission to gather, and the official Soviet news agency Tass quoted Vladimir Kamchatov of the electorate's association as predicting that up to 300,000 people might turn out.

Demonstrations are planned in a number of provincial cities across the vast Russian republic, which stretches from Finland to the Sea of Japan.

The gatherings come just before March 4 elections to choose members of the Russian republic's legislatures. Elections also are scheduled that day in the Ukraine and Byelorussia.

West Germany is a member of Nato, and the western alliance has more than 300,000 troops in the country, about 250,000 of them American. East Germany belongs to the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact, and about 300,000 Soviet soldiers are stationed in East Germany.

Hoffmann said the armed forces of a future joint German army should initially be reduced to about 300,000 men, and later cut to between 150,000 and 200,000 soldiers.

Gen. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, West Germany's representative at the Vienna troop reduction talks, said any troop strength for a united Germany over 300,000 men "would cause security concerns of our neighbours, especially France and Poland."

West Germany has 490,000 troops. East German officials say its armed forces have shrunk from 170,000 to 100,000 men in recent months.

Talks with the West German military on merging the two countries' armed forces could begin soon after the East German government is elected following the country's first free elections on March 18, Hoffmann said.

Meanwhile, leading dissident expelled from Romania five years ago accused the interim government of being undemocratic and said he was still being followed by secret police.

East German Defence Minister

GDR proposes heavy troop cuts

Modrow 'not to run'

EAST BERLIN, Feb 23, (AP): East Germany yesterday proposed slashing the armed forces of a united Germany by two-thirds of present combined forces, and called for some US and Soviet troops to remain during the unification process.

The journalist contacted by telephone from Bucharest today said: "The rallies scheduled for Sunday grew out of the success of a Feb 4 protest, when a column of demonstrators — 60 people wide and more than a kilometre (mile) long — paraded through the streets of Moscow demanding that the Communist Party give up its grip on power."

The rallies and demonstrations called for this weekend will be the first major public gathering since the party's Central Committee

Theodor Hoffmann, outlining a plan for merging the two countries' armed forces, said both states should remain in their respective military alliances until unification is achieved under a new European security system.

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East German Defence Minister

An anti-Opera Ball demonstrator gets beaten by several riot policemen in Vienna. (Reuter wirephoto)

Princess Caroline of Monaco and her husband Stefano Casiraghi stand in their box and watch the opening ceremony of Opera Ball in Vienna (Reuter wirephoto)

Timisoara up in arms once again

BUCHAREST, Feb 23, (Agencies): Thousands of people demonstrated against the provisional government yesterday in Timisoara, cradle of Romania's revolution, local journalists reported.

The journalists contacted by telephone from Bucharest today said: "The demonstration was peaceful but the crowd chanted slogans against President Ion Iliescu and the provisional government."

Timisoara police said last evening that only about 200 people were involved in the demonstration.

The revolution, which ended with the ousting and execution of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, was born in the Transylvanian city on December 16, when thousands of people took to the streets.

Reports that almost 5,000 people died in the revolution now look like exaggerations, said a spokesman for the Romanian government.

But he said this would include computations with Poland's government.

The West German newspaper Suddeutsche Zeitung reported that East German Premier Hans Modrow will not run in next month's elections for the re-organised Communist Party, now called the Party of Democratic Socialism.

But the party's campaign manager, Andrei Baloi, told the official newspaper ADN that he could not confirm the report and that no decision had been reached on Modrow's candidacy.

Meanwhile, leading dissident expelled from Romania five years ago accused the interim government of being undemocratic and said he was still being followed by secret police.

Representatives of 12 ethnic minorities in Romania met yesterday with the country's Vice-President, Carol Koroly, to request a law guaranteeing minority rights, and the re-establishment of schools in the Turkish, Serbian and Bulgarian languages. Koroly described the meeting as positive but gave no details.

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expelled from Romania five years ago accused the interim government of being undemocratic and said he was still being followed by secret police.

East German Defence Minister

An anti-Opera Ball demonstrator gets beaten by several riot policemen in Vienna. (Reuter wirephoto)

Princess Caroline of Monaco and her husband Stefano Casiraghi stand in their box and watch the opening ceremony of Opera Ball in Vienna (Reuter wirephoto)

Clash during Vienna ball

Protest against display of wealth: 69 hurt

VIENNA, Feb 23, (AP): Hundreds of demonstrators clashed with police outside the Vienna state opera as socialites waltzed inside, and authorities said today that at least 69 people were injured.

The 1,300 demonstrators were demanding that funds raised to finance the annual opera ball be spent for social programmes to help the poor and homeless.

The violence outside the opera peaked as President Kurt Waldheim and his wife arrived to attend the event last night. But the nearly 3,000 police officers on hand ushered them and other dignitaries safely inside.

Although two leftist groups received permits for the protest, police said they were not responsible for the violence. Police president Gunter Soepel said the clashes were triggered by right-wing radicals who joined the protest.

A police communiqué today said at least 69 people were injured in clashes around the opera,

including 60 policemen and nine demonstrators. Ten other demonstrators were taken into custody, it said.

The demonstrators were protesting the display of wealth and pageantry at the ball. Some posters said: "Gobble up the rich."

Police used shields to ward off stones and bottles as they charged the crowd with clubs and dogs, witnesses and reporters said. Scuffles also broke out between demonstrators and groups of right-wingers, police reported.

Reporters watching the scene said police action at times appeared uncoordinated and haphazard, with some officers rounding up inactive demonstrators and others driving into the crowd on motorcycles.

Some of the chaos may have resulted from police radio contact being briefly disrupted by pirate transmitters, deriding or abusing police officials.

Radical demonstrators smashed shopwindows and damaged cars in streets near the opera, a police statement said.

The message said the denial of visas was inconsistent with the recent pattern of relations between the two countries.

Dien Del claimed Vietnamese troops took part in the fighting. Hanoi contends all its forces were withdrawn from Cambodia last September.

The rebel liberation front had taken the town Dec 5 after three major assaults. It gave them a springboard for attack on Sisophon, a government military operations center 20 kilometers (13 miles) to the south.

Starting today, the prince was to live in a simple one-room village house without running water or central electricity, said his spokesman, Ek Serayevitch.

"All Cambodians want to live in Cambodia

and die in Cambodia," he told about 100 reporters bussed in for the homecoming.

In recent months, the three-party guerrilla coalition — comprising the KPNLF, the communist Khmer Rouge and Sihanouk's followers — made major military gains in northwestern Cambodia, including Oddar Meanchey.

But government troops recently launched a counteroffensive that scored its first major victory with the capture of Svay Chek.

Phnom Penh radio announced government troops "succeeded in completely recapturing Svay Chek. We are now in full control of this area."

Cambodia troops capture strategic town as Sihanouk returns home

ODDAR MEANCHEY PROVINCE, Cambodia, Feb 23, (AP): Saying all Cambodians want to die in their homeland, guerrilla leader Prince Norodom Sihanouk ended 11 years of exile today by returning to live in a rugged "liberated zone" of Cambodia.

Guerrillas of his coalition movement announced today they had lost a strategic town to troops of Cambodia's Vietnamese-installed government.

Gen. Dien Del, deputy commander of the rebel Khmer People's National Liberation Front, told reporters that government forces aided by Vietnamese troops retook Svay Chek.

He said a shortage of Chinese-supplied ammunition would prevent the guerrillas from immediately trying to retake the town.

Rifle-toting guerrillas and civilians chanting, "Long live his royal highness," greeted Sihanouk and his wife, Monique, as they crossed by car from Thailand to a parched field about 100 meters (yards) inside the border province of Oddar Meanchey.

Sihanouk, 68, said they would live with their white poodle, Mickey, in the "liberated zone" controlled by guerrilla fighters until the entire country was free.

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Israeli jets flatten PFLP base

SIDON, Feb 23, (Agencies): Israeli warplanes executed an early morning raid against a Palestinian base near this southern provincial capital today, police said.

A police spokesman said the raid targeted a base manned by fighters of Dr George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in the Kfar Jara hills, east of Sidon.

The spokesman, who cannot be named in line with regulations, said at least three

Israeli jet fighters carried out the five-minute attack at 2:15 am (0015 GMT).

The raiding jet fighters fired six air-to-surface missiles against the PFLP base, he said.

"The aircraft of the enemy carried out a raid on one of our positions in Kfar Jara which resulted in the destruction of the targeted post," a PFLP spokesman said.

The spokesman said the base was empty during the raid — the third this week on

Lebanese or Palestinian positions in South Lebanon.

Witnesses in Sidon, 21 miles (40 kms) from Beirut, said the jets roared low over the city, shaking them out of bed.

"We rushed to basements and air raid shelters assuming the city was under attack," said Fatima Hableh, a housewife.

Her husband, Hassan Hableh, said he watched the planes releasing scarlet balloons to deflect heat-seeking anti-air-

craft missiles.

The raiding jets, Hableh said, also released parachute flares that illuminated the whole region.

Defenders fired heavily at the planes from anti-aircraft guns.

A Turkish janitor working at Turkey's embassy in Lebanon was kidnapped from his Beirut home today, the Turkish Foreign Ministry said.

Free hostages, Iran daily pleads

DAMASCUS, Feb 23, (AP): A Tehran newspaper said yesterday that foreign hostages held in Lebanon, including nine Americans, had become a tool to be used against Iran and that they should be freed.

The editorial in the English-language Tehran Times was the first known statement by an Iranian newspaper in support of freeing the hostages, whose fate is believed linked to a power struggle within the Iranian leadership.

The newspaper is close to Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Freeing the hostages would be in line with Islamic principles and Muslim forces "should work to get the hostages free with no preconditions," the paper said in a report carried by the official Islamic republic news agency.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaz told the sister of one of the hostages that the Tehran Times editorial was "a good sign" and that he would be going to Iran soon to push for a hostage release.

Al Sharaz told Peggy Say, sister of Associated Press chief Middle East correspondent Terry Anderson, held for nearly five years, that he would "work intensely with the top Iranian leaders" on the hostage issue.

US offers Egypt tanks in surplus

WASHINGTON, Feb 23, (UPI): The State Department confirmed on Wednesday the United States has offered to send Egyt M-60A1 tanks from Nato stocks in Europe to replace obsolete Soviet-supplied vehicles.

Published reports said about 700 tanks are involved in the deal and Egypt would be allowed to have the entire batch for the shipping costs — about \$1 million — instead of the \$140 million that such vehicles would normally cost.

Spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler confirmed there are discussions under way on the deal and that members of Nato and Israel have been consulted.

She said Israel was offered a similar deal, but declined.

Under the offer, the Egyptians would destroy one T-54 or T-55 Soviet-build tank for every M-60A1 delivered from US stores.

We need action, Baker says on Mideast talks

WASHINGTON, Feb 23, (AP): Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens arrived yesterday from Mexico for a meeting with Secretary of State James Baker on prospects for opening Mideast peace negotiations.

Baker has tried for months to arrange a three-way session here with Arens and Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel-Meguid. His plans call for a meeting to be followed by peace talks between Israeli and Palestinian representatives.

Baker told the house foreign affairs committee yesterday that the agenda and the composition of a Palestinian delegation remained unsettled.

"You measure progress in the Middle East in very small steps," he said. "I'm going to continue to remain engaged as long as there is some hope for moving the process forward."

"But we need to — we really need now to start. We need action. We've done a lot of talking. Maybe we can do some more talking. But the time for action is coming very, very close."

Meanwhile, Shimon Peres, the Israeli Finance Minister, told the US television network CNN in an interview that the PLO has accepted a formula for a Palestinian delegation.

Peres who heads Israel's opposition Labour Party, said it would be a non-PLO delegation including one or two Palestinians who were expelled from Israel and one or two who live in East Jerusalem.

"I do believe it is acceptable to the Egyptians, to the Palestinians and I do not see any reason why it should not be acceptable to us as well," he said.

Leaders of the Labour Party warned yesterday that they will bolt the coalition cabinet unless the right-wing Likud Bloc accepts within two weeks a comprehensive package to clear the way for preliminary peace talks.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, under pressure from Labour Party, his own Likud and the United States, has said he will not accept any ultimatum on steps towards Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

AL heads towards Cairo

CAIRO, Feb 23, (UPI): Egypt has hosted its first official Arab League meeting since it was expelled from the organisation for signing a 1979 peace treaty with Israel.

Egyptian government officials said they saw the meeting of the Arab Economic and Social Council (AESOC) as a prelude to the eventual transfer of the 22-member Arab League headquarters back to Cairo from Tunis.

Egypt's membership of the Arab League was suspended in

Iran eager to heal rift with Gulf states

UN bid to revive peace talks

NICOSIA, Feb 23, (Agencies): President Hashemi Rafsanjani yesterday expressed Iran's readiness to put aside differences and mend ties with the Gulf Arab states, Tehran Radio reported.

The broadcast, monitored in Nicosia, said Rafsanjani's comments came in a meeting with visiting Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Yousef Bin Alawi Abdullah.

"Despite some differences, we are completely prepared to cooperate closely in expanding relations with the other regional countries," the radio quoted

Rafsanjani as saying.

Rafsanjani added that "the countries of the region, with their good financial strength and oil resources, and with regard to their specific conditions, can live in unity and friendship and strengthen their goals," the radio reported.

Iran has managed to resume ties with most of the Gulf states which it alienated in the eight-year war through spreading the war into the Gulf's shipping lanes and firing missiles at Kuwait.

The six-member Gulf Cooperation Council selected Oman to mediate in the Iran-Iraq

dispute during the GCC summit in December.

The alliance of Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates sought to mediate in the Gulf war and since the ceasefire has worked to break the stalemate in the peace talks.

The Iran-Iraq peace talks began on Aug 25, 1988, five days after the United Nations-sponsored ceasefire took hold.

The United Nations, discussing with Iran and Iraq and the Security Council how best to revive stalled talks on a peace settlement in the Gulf, a UN source said yesterday.

Afghan rebels' last bid for unity

ISLAMABAD, Feb 23, (Reuters): Two Afghan rebel leaders left Pakistan for Tehran in a last-ditch effort to persuade Iran-based Mujahedeen to take part in rebel elections.

Shia Muslim groups in Iran have so far refused to join rebel efforts to convene a traditional grand council — widely seen as their last chance to forge a credible alternative to President Najibullah in Kabul.

The plan faces difficulty among the rebel leadership in Pakistan, with one and possibly two leaders refusing to take part. But rebel leader Syed Ahmad Gailani said he hoped he could draw the Shia groups in Iran into the political process.

"I hope so because this is in favour of all the people of Afghanistan," the head of the National Islamic Front said before leaving with Jamiat-i-Islami leader Burhanuddin Rabbani.

"Although it may not be the most favoured sort of elections, it is better than not having anything."

Mujahedeen sources said the Tehran trip was a final effort to incite the eight-party alliance of Shia groups in the elections due to be held in the next few months.

The two leaders will be seeking support from Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, but a Western diplomat said their main task would be to persuade Iran's religious leaders.

Pakistan army Chief of Staff General Mirza Aslam Beg, who is in charge of his country's Afghan policy, went to Tehran last week partly to prepare the ground.

A pro-government Iranian newspaper on Tuesday urged a ceasefire in the Afghan war and a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to decide what sort of government Afghans want.

It called it an improved version of proposals announced last week by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

Western diplomats say the rebels, who have failed to win victory on the battlefield since the Soviet troops left Afghanistan a year ago, will not get another chance.

"Everybody realises that this Shura (council) has to take place. It has to be credible and if it fails there will be real problems," said one diplomat.

Meanwhile, Mujahedeen bombard Kabul with rockets Wednesday, killing four people and wounding 15 in the bloodiest such attack in several weeks, state-run Kabul radio said.

Truce collapses

3 killed, 22 hurt in Beirut battle

BEIRUT, Feb 23, (AP): Rival Christian forces duelled with mortars and tank cannon in East Beirut today, shattering efforts to reopen roads and stabilise a ceasefire in the intra-Christian showdown.

Police said five 120mm mortar rounds crashed into crowded residential districts of West Beirut, close to the city's dividing Green Line, killing three people and wounding 22.

The Barak Hospital, the closest to the stricken districts, issued an appeal through the Muslim Voice of the National Radio for urgent blood donations to cope with the flow of casualties.

The radio said that West Beirut, which has not been involved in the power struggle pitting renegade Gen. Michel Aoun against militia chieftain Samir Geagea, "always pays the price."

"Why did West Beirut shell?" the announcer asked. "For what cause did these innocent victims fall?"

A police spokesman said a casualty report was not immediately available from the escalating duel in East Beirut.

By police count, the showdown for mastery of the 310-square-mile (800-square-kilometre) Christian enclave has killed 688 people and wounded 1,906 since it broke out Jan. 30.

The toll included 34 dead and 171 wounded in West and south Beirut, which have been repeatedly subjected to shelling by the warring Christian factions.

The overall toll of fatalities also included 108 soldiers that Aoun's command reported as being killed in the fighting.

The Lebanese Forces command, in a communiqué, blamed the sudden barrage on gunmen of Aoun's 19,000-strong army, saying they targeted its East

Beirut stronghold of Ashrafiyah from tanks and mortar emplacements on the city's southeastern edges.

The communiqué said the barrage was an attempt to "block efforts to remove mines, reopen roads and disengage the forces."

But Aoun's radio said Geagea's 6,000-strong militia "never tried to reopen any road."

"While claiming they wanted to remove mines and reopen blocked roads, the gunmen were opening fire from sniping nests at residential districts defended by the army," the communiqué said.

The communiqué, broadcast by Aoun's Radio Lebanon, said Geagea's gunmen shelled the army-held districts of Furn El Shubak, Tabwita and Sin El Fil.

The police spokesman, who cannot be named in line with regulations, said it could not be determined who provoked the barrage, the worst violation of a ceasefire.

Shells started crashing into Ashrafiyah at 12:30 am (0300 GMT), almost half an hour after about 5,000 people gathered in the district's Saanane square and prayed for peace in Lebanon, police said.

• A senior Lebanese government official told "Al Sayasah" that Israel has joined current attempts to resolve the Lebanese crisis, especially after the outbreak of the inter-Christian war in East Beirut.

The official said that Israel is proposing a political plan to reorganise the Lebanese society based on the establishment of cantons in Lebanon.

The government official said that the Israeli plan which has been presented to the United States, comes under the headline, "union of Lebanese cantons" and provided for the establishment of expanded political decentralisation in five districts and for Beirut to remain an open and demilitarised city.

MIDEAST BRIEFS

Visa restrictions

LONDON, Feb 23, (Reuters): The British government said today it would require Algerians, Moroccans and Tunisians entering Britain to have visas, because their arrival in large numbers had become a burden on immigration authorities.

In the light of increasing difficulties with nationalities of these countries, the government decided the time had come for the UK also to require visas of other European nationalities, Home Secretary David Waddington said in a statement to parliament.

Arab armies have fought and lost four wars against Israel since 1948. Egypt, the most populous Arab country, has a peace treaty with the Jewish state.

Iraqi air force General Ali Abboud said Israel had military superiority over some Arab states but not all combined.

The last joint Arab arms industry project between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE collapsed after the three Gulf states quit in protest at Cairo's treaty with Israel in 1979.

Iraq is one of the fastest growing Arab arms industries, including advanced missile and military aircraft and satellite technology.

Public protest mounts: Mujahedeen

Demos in Iran cities

ATHENS, Feb 23, (UPI): A Baghdad-based Iranian exile group said yesterday that scattered demonstrations against the country's ruling clerics were held during the past week in Tehran and other major cities.

The Mujahedeen Khalq organisation, which opposes the rule of the clergy in Iran, said: "In Isfahan, protesters set fire to tires and clashed with guards on Isfahan's Imam street."

In a statement telecast to Athens, the Mujahedeen said scattered demonstrations were held in Shiraz, some 400 miles (640 km) south of Tehran, where people clashed with security forces.

Similar incidents occurred in Hamedan, some 200 miles (320 km) southwest of the capital, and while anti-government slogans appeared on walls in the northwestern city of Tabriz.

There was no immediate confirmation of the reports from official independent sources.

Last week angry soccer fans, protesting the cancellation of matches in Tehran's two main stadiums, swept through the city centre yelling slogans against President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Tehran residents said the crowds tore up a large picture of the late Ayatollah Khomeini and broke the windows of a department store outside which the picture was displayed.

The Mujahedeen said: "Continuing turmoil and clashes between the public and the regime's guards in Tehran's central streets in recent days have led to closure of shops," while on some streets shops opened for only a few hours a day.

Demand quick polls

ALGIERS, Feb 23, (UPI): A leading Iranian radical today warned Muslims who could kill author Salman Rushdie but hesitated that they were being un-Islamic, Tehran radio reported.

Leading figures in Tehran's radical camp have been getting media mileage over the past three weeks by reaffirming the late Ayatollah Khomeini's year-old death sentence against British author for his novel "The Satanic Verses."

Snowstorm toll 31

ANKARA, Feb 23, (AP): Snowstorms have paralysed eastern Turkey in the past four days, claiming 31 lives, according to news reports.

The semi-official Anatolia News Agency reported Wednesday that four people froze to death in the province of Mardin while walking from one village to another. In Varto township, near the Iranian border, two people died when an avalanche buried a village house, the dispatch said.

Israel admitted

GENEVA, Feb 23, (Reuters): A UN-sponsored arms conference has granted Israel observer status at chemical weapons negotiations for the first time, despite objections from Iran, Algeria and other Muslim countries, diplomats said today.

Most of the 40 member nations of the conference on disarmament felt it was important not to exclude any country if it hoped for chemical weapons treaty to be effective, the diplomats said.

At the time of their abduction, a spokeswoman for Doctors Without Borders said they were in good health and we take care of their repatriation by plane.

The spokesman did not want to specify



Israeli economy affected by Arab boycott: Enezi

Manpower issue referred to Arab League

THE director of the Kuwaiti based Israeli Boycott Office in Kuwait, Ahmed Al Enezi speaking at a meeting held recently in Damascus said that several recommendations and amendments had been adopted which aimed at developing boycott regulations.

The official said that the meeting had endorsed the revision of the previous boycott resolution and had decided to ban all goods that bore prohibited trade marks — irrespective of their origin.

With regard to the countries providing Israel with manpower, Enezi said that this issue has been referred to the Arab League Council and it is expected that relevant countries will be informed of the negative effects of this action with Arab countries and hinted that continuity could adversely reflect on the workforce of these countries in Arab world.

The official disclosed that the meeting had decided to lift the ban imposed on about 18 companies of different nationalities as these companies had agreed to comply with the Arab Boycott regulations. Further it has been decided to impose a ban on 22 firms who have violated the Arab boycott laws.

He went on to state that the Arab boycott had caused negative economic effects on the Israeli economy, by imposing an economic blockade against Israel by depriving the Zionist enemy entry into Arab markets. On the Arab level, the boycott provides protection to the Arab economies from the Israeli economic invasion and added that politically, it is intended to keep the just Palestinian cause alive in the international community.

Enezi denied that Israeli goods are smuggled into the Arab markets and that the boycott had lost its effectiveness. He cited Israeli leaders demands to bring the boycott to an end as attesting to the validity of the boycott procedures.

The officials disclosed that the Israeli

boycott offices in the Arab countries encourage the purchase of Palestinian goods by permitting them to enter into Arab countries, as these goods are produced in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, he criticised some Arab countries for not strictly being committed to the recommendations adopted by the Israeli Boycott Office meetings. Enezi praised the co-operation and co-ordination prevailing among the Arab boycott offices.

Action Line

MY son's residence has been included in my wife's passport. She is planning to go for higher studies. I want to make a separate passport for my son. Can I sponsor my son.

Jerry A MAJORITY of expatriates endorse the child's name in the mother's passport. Did you also do the same? Or did you get a residence permit for the child and had it endorsed in the mother's passport. If you got the residence permit, then it is simple. After making the child's passport, you'll have to get it transferred to the new document.

The rules say that if both parents work on visa No. 18 in Kuwait, either the mother or father can sponsor the child. If your wife is working here, and presumably you also have a job, then you can sponsor the child.

If your wife is not working, then a foreigner must be eligible under the salary requirements to sponsor dependents like wife and children. The minimum salary required is KD650 in the private and KD450 in the public sector.

MY wife is under my sponsorship and has a valid visa No. 22. She has delivered a baby in India. Kindly advise me what should be done to endorse the child's name in the mother's passport.

Mohammed Salman A CHILD's name can be included in the passport by the authority that issued the passport. You'll have to go to the immigration department in India and have the child's name added to the passport.

After endorsing the child's name in the passport, you must go to the Kuwait embassy closest to your home and tell them that your wife intends to bring the child to Kuwait. They may give a temporary visa, or make an endorsement in the passport. If you do this, then you can obtain a visa for the child, and thereafter the mother and child come to Kuwait, you can get the residence permit for the child.

It is essential to obtain a residence permit for the child. Many expatriates believe that if they get the "name" endorsed in the mother's passport, they don't need a residence permit for the child. A residence permit for the child is needed, under the immigration rules of Kuwait.

ISRA Wa Miraj fell on Friday, Feb 23. All government and banks declared a holiday on Feb 24. Please advise if private companies staff are also eligible for such holidays?

Kaisar ARTICLE 36 of the private sector labour law lists Isra Wa Miraj (Ascension Day) as an official holiday. It says that if the "work circumstances require keeping any labourer at work on any official holidays" (such labourers) shall be paid double wages). Double wages is normal daily salary plus an extra day's wages. The law does not specifically answer your query. Private companies normally use their discretion.

I CAME to Kuwait in April 1985 as a domestic helper on visa No. 20. After I finished my two year contract, I did not go back to my country but continued working in the home of my employer for three more years. I will complete five years service with my employer in April this year. Recently I received a telegram from my home, asking me to come immediately.

Do I have the right to ask for my roundtrip ticket or equivalent in Kuwaiti dinars? Can I ask for vacation salary — i.e. one month salary for each year of service?

Please quote the Kuwaiti law so that I can ask for my benefits.

B.B. DOMESTIC helpers are not covered by the private sector labour law. They come under the civil law, which says that a domestic helper's employment and his rights must be in accordance with the contract. Do you have a contract with your employer? If yes, what does it say? If your contract says you are entitled to a roundtrip every two years, and a month's salary, you can ask for it. If it doesn't cover the question, then the matter depends on the goodwill of your employer. If he is happy with your service, and if he wants to give you a roundtrip ticket and five months extra salary, he may give it to you. It is advisable to talk to your employer in a friendly manner and explain your difficulties while asking him for the money and ticket. He may understand your problem and help you out.

If you are going home permanently, that is cancelling your visa, then you are entitled to get a one-way ticket home, according to the rules.

I AM a domestic driver with three children. I have been working with a family for the last one and a half years without any facilities, which were included in my contract. I am not getting any salary on time. I am a married man with children and I have to repay KD300 I paid to come here. Whenever I ask for my salary, I'm told it will be paid "tomorrow." But tomorrow never comes.

P.L.S. PERHAPS, it would give you some consolation to know that you are not the only person who has not received his salary. A large number of domestic helpers — drivers, maids and houseboys — are not being paid on time, sometimes for as long as four months to two years. It would be advisable to talk once again to your employer and ask him in a friendly manner to give you your back pay. This is the only way in which you might be able to get your salary. Another alternative would be to seek your embassy's assistance, and ask them to talk to your employer on your behalf.

If you have a problem drop us a line and we will try and answer your queries as best as we can. Write to Action Line, Arab Times, P.O. Box 2270, 13023 Safat, Kuwait or Fax your questions to us on Tel: 4847495.

GCC, EEC industrialists conclude co-operation talks

GRANADA, Feb 23, (Kuna): Industrialists from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Economic Community yesterday concluded a three-day meeting here aimed at strengthening co-operation between the two groups.

Kuwait's Ambassador to Spain Jassem Mohamed Al Sabagh who took part in the meeting told Kuna the gathering was a good opportunity for exchanging view on joint co-operation in industrial and investment domains the described talks as positive and fruitful.

The delegation of the EEC was headed by Vice-President of the European committee Martin Bangeman and member of the EEC's committee for Mediterranean and Asia affairs Abel Matutes.



Protection system contract

Kuwait has signed an agreement with the French Interior Ministry for a protection system of its land and sea borders. The agreement was signed by the Undersecretary of the Interior Ministry Maj. Gen. Yousef Bader Al Khorani with senior officials of the Exports Office of the French Interior Ministry currently visiting Kuwait. No details about the agreement were released. Picture shows Khorani exchanging copies of the agreement with the French officials.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Amiri cables

KUWAIT, Feb 23, (Kuna): HH the Amir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah yesterday sent a cable of congratulations to the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Bu Hamad Al Thani on the anniversary of his assumption to power.

HH sent a cable of congratulations to Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei on the occasion of his country's National Day.

HH Crown Prince and Premier Sheikh Saad Al Abdallah Al Salem Al Sabah also sent a congratulatory cable to Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei on the occasion of his country's National Day.

Health centres

KUWAIT, Feb 23, (Kuna): Planning and acting Health Minister Dr. Abdulfahman Al Awadi will inaugurate early next month three new health centres within the context of celebrations marking the 29th anniversary of Kuwait National Day.

The three health centres in Surra, Riqqa and Mangaf neighbourhoods, will be opened on March 3, 5 and 6 respectively.

Shamalan receives

KUWAIT, Feb 23, (Kuna): Minister of Higher Education Ali Abdulla Al Shamalan yesterday received at his office head of Egyptian youth and sports council Abdul El Dein.

Shamalan and his guest, during the meeting, exchanged views of bilateral relations and ways of boosting them in addition to issues of common interest.

UNHCR meeting

GENEVA, Feb 23, (Kuna): Under the chairmanship of Kuwait's Ambassador to Geneva, Sheikh Salem Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, a delegation of Arab ambassadors today met with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Thormvald Stoltenberg.

Describing the meeting as basically a "good-will" visit and to congratulate the new high commissioner upon his assumption of office, Dr. Sabah said the Arab delegation assured Stoltenberg of their support and co-operation.

Asked whether the financial crisis facing the UNHCR was brought up, Dr. Sabah said that the high commissioner had indicated that he would be undertaking visits to a number of countries to urge greater contributions from countries so as to reduce the deficit facing the organisation.

Mitterrand visit

MANAMA, Feb 23, (Kuna): French President Francois Mitterrand starts a brief visit to Bahrain tomorrow, it was announced here today.

The Manama-based Gulf News Agency said that during his visit the French president will have talks with Bahraini officials on bilateral relations and a number of Arab and Gulf issues, particularly those relating to the Gulf Co-operation Council, the Middle East crisis, latest international changes and topics of mutual concern.

President Mitterrand is currently visiting Bangladesh following his recent visit to Pakistan.

Indian embassy

A PRESS release from the Indian Embassy in Kuwait has stated that the embassy will remain closed on Sunday 25th February, 1990 on the occasion of National Day of Kuwait.

Pak testing

THE Secondary School Certificate (SSC) Annual Examination 1990 of the Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Islamabad will commence from 25th February, 1990 at the Pakistan School and College Rumariah Centre at 07:30 hours. All regular students are advised to collect their roll number slips from their respective schools. Private candidates can obtain their roll number slips and date sheet from the principal of the institution that has forwarded their forms.

From the courts

Man gets 5 years, deportation for fraud

KUWAIT'S Criminal Court has sentenced a man identified as Mustapha Jamal to five years in jail with hard labour to be followed by deportation.

The court was told that the defendant had forged three applications for resident permits for KD800 each. He had convinced the three that he was working as a visa representative (mandoub) and that they were legally sponsored. The forgery came to light when one of the sponsored three approached the sponsor for a transfer of residence. The sponsor promptly called the police and categorically stated that he had never sponsored the man. The forgery of the other two visas was subsequently brought to the attention of law enforcement authorities.

KUWAIT'S Criminal Court has sentenced a man to three years imprisonment with hard labour and subsequent deportation on the charge of tampering with an official document.

The court was told that the victim met the accused at a popular cafe upon his arrival to the country. The accused invited the victim to stay with him in his apartment and then asked for his passport under the pretence that he had to hand it over to the landlord as guarantee for unpaid rent.

The court was informed by the victim that some of the contents in his passport had been altered. The convict confessed that he had handed over the passport to a friend who used it for illegal purposes.

A WOMAN was fined KD10 by the court after she was accused of giving birth to a baby girl and then with the help of her mother abandoning it in the Jahra desert.

The woman confessed to the court that she had remarried conventionally after she divorced her first husband, but hid the fact that she was already pregnant by her first husband. When the baby was born her mother took it and abandoned it in the desert. Security authorities subsequently found the body of the newborn. Investigations led to the mother of the baby who had registered the child at a health centre.

KUWAIT'S Criminal Court sentenced four different people to several different sentences and fines along with deportation.

The case was referred to the police by a defendant identified as Khaled (the first defendant in the case).

The court was told that Khaled had rented a flat in Abu Halifa and shared it with the accused identified as AH.

Khaled claimed that AH consumed alcohol at the flat and under the pretext that he needed space for his two wives who were to join him shortly, he kicked AH out and changed the locks. He however brought a maid to his apartment pending the arrival of his wives and the court heard that he indulged in sexual intercourse with her.

The court was also told that Khaled entered the flat once to find that the locks had been broken open and his former flatmate was watching pornographic films with another defendant identified as Amer. Khaled reported the incident to the police who subsequently arrested the two and confiscated the films.

AH and the maid however were sentenced to six months imprisonment each to be followed by deportation and Amer was fined KD10.

SECURITY men at Jahra Governorate have found fragments of the body of an Asian woman inside a power station in Jahra. The body was discovered by people of the area who were overcome with the foul stench of the decomposing body. They notified the police who recovered parts of the body. Security authorities have begun investigations and the body has been sent to the forensic lab.

Municipality to fire 1000 more cleaners

By Jamal Amin

KUWAIT: Municipality has made about 3,000 labourers redundant over the past five years, mostly cleaning workers and is planning to dismiss 1,000 more in the coming fiscal year. Director of the Personnel Department at Kuwait Municipality Abdulla Al Khlaifi announced. The main cause of the dismissals was the result of the municipality handing over cleaning contracts

in most areas to private companies.

This would leave only about 1,500 labourers with the municipality and even these would be transferred to the emergency labour force and the slaughterhouse department, Khlaifi added. He said that the municipality was paying about KD 7.3 million in annual salaries to these labourers and the amount to be reduced.

MUSCAT, Feb 23, (AP): Conservation officials here have said they would vigorously crack down on desert poachers who smuggle rare animal and bird species out of the country for sale.

The move follows the jailing in December of four tribesmen caught tracking Arabian gazelles over the United Arab Emirates border. Conservation Department spokesman Yousuf Al Baloushi said.

"We believe they were part of an organised gang operating in the desert," Baloushi said. "Investigations are presently under way to find out exactly

what has been going on."

Other prime targets, he said, were the Nubian Ibex and the Houbara bird, known biologically as Macqueen's Bustard, a resident breeder the size of a goose.

Poachers caught them live and exported them to neighbouring countries where there was good price for the live animals and birds, he said.

"It appears there is a ready market for rare species like gazelles, which are said to fetch

292 set free in ND amnesty

KUWAIT, Feb 23, (Kuna): An Amiri Decree yesterday set free 292 prisoners, while if commuted sentences of 519 others on the occasion of the 29th National Day celebrations, it was officially announced here today.

Director general of the General Administration for the Implementation of Sentences and Jails Col. Fahd Al Yassin said that the 292 prisoners were released yesterday, while 519 will spend lesser time behind bars.

The freed persons covered by the Amiri Decree comprised 110 prisoners facing criminal charges, 128 who committed misdemeanors and 54 with traffic infractions.

The numbers included 146 Kuwaitis, 133 men, five women, and eight juveniles.

Telecom tower to be ready in 1991: Gabandi

No construction problems

THE deputy chief engineer of construction projects at the Ministry of Public Works has denied rumours that work on the KD27 million Telecommunications Tower and Complex has ground to halt because of the weakness of the soil.

Bader Al Gabandi said that experts had examined the soil in 1981, when samples were taken at a depth of 70 metres. These tests were made in co-operation with government research stations and Kuwait University, he added.

The concrete and iron used in the project were tested in Canadian labs and the designs of the 372 metre tall tower incorporated all the information, Gabandi said.

Kuwait advocates support for intifada

UNITED NATIONS, Feb 23, (Kuna): Kuwait late Wednesday urged the international community in general and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in particular to increase its financial support to the Palestinian people who are fighting to liberate their land.

Addressing the four-day special session of UNDP's governing council, Mariam Abdulkarim Al Awadi, assistant under-secretary in the Ministry of Planning, said Kuwait supports the proposal of UNDP's administrator James Grant to allocate \$12 million to the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories.

However, she added, "We emphasise the need to increase our support to the Palestinian people who started their intifada more than two years ago to put an end to the long-standing occupation of their land and to their extremely difficult living conditions."

Awadi also thanked the administrator for his efforts in facing last year's floods in Democratic Yemen and called for an increase in the amount allocated to deal with the problems resulting from that disaster.

He added that lab would issue certificates stating the quality-level of any commodity offered for testing, and that accordingly dealers who trade in commodities failing to meet with approved standards would be liable to legal responsibility.

He also said that the lab undertook to offer official confirmation of abidance by approved specs for local industries and factories, which would enable the protection of consumer

EDITORIALS

ARAB TIMES

Thought for today

NOTHING in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood
— Marie Curie, Polish-born scientist (1867-1934).

East bloc inspires Reform winds sweep Nepal

KATHMANDU, Nepal. (AP): A movement to restore political pluralism has gripped the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal, pitting its Harvard-educated monarch against two banned political parties inspired by the changes sweeping Eastern Europe.

Clashes between police and demonstrators demanding end to a 29-year-old ban on political parties have claimed at least 11 lives this week in usually tranquil Nepal.

Arrested

Activists claim more than 1,000 people have been arrested in the government crackdown on the Movement for Restoration of Multiparty Democracy. The government says 175 people have been arrested since Sunday when the campaign was launched — for the third time in 11 years.

"I think this time the government is shaken," said a Western diplomat who spoke on condition of not being identified further. "They have realised that bullets and tough talk won't make the problem disappear."

Leading the agitation are the banned coalition of left-wing parties and the Nepali Congress Party, which governed the country during its only two years in history as a Western-style democracy.

"For the last 29 years we have faced atrocities," said Hari Bol Bhattacharya, a senior member of the Congress Party who has evaded arrest. "It's time to get rid of the system, bring in a fresh system."

Bhattacharya, who spoke in a telephone interview from an undisclosed location, said the movement would continue until the government gave in. "We have waited enough. Now we won't give up until our demands are fulfilled," he said.

Nepal has witnessed startling political events since the Shah dynasty began its rule in mid-18th century. After almost a century on the throne, the Shaha were reduced to titular heads by the Ranas, who established a parallel line of hereditary prime ministers.

In 1951, King Tribhuwan of the Shah dynasty and the Nepali Congress Party overthrew the Rana prime minister and established a democratic constitution under which the monarch and an elected government were to share power.

Elections

The country's first general elections were not held until eight years later, as Tribhuwan and his son King Mahendra appeared loath to accept the role of semi-titular head of state.

The Congress Party was voted to power in 1959, but Mahendra dismissed its government two years later and banned all political parties, accusing them of corruption and misleading the nation.

That has still stands notwithstanding agitations and violence in 1979 and 1985. The 1979 movement led to a historic national referendum the next year, in which the people narrowly voted to retain the country's non-partisan Rashtriya Panchayat, or national assembly.

Analysts say one reason for the people voting for a party democracy was the assurance by King Birendra, Mahendra's son, of greater political freedom and genuine representation in the assembly.

"We thought we would have it good either way," said Debendra Raj Panday, a political commentator. "But we remained where we were. The palace still runs everything in this country."

"The legislators are voted with the government's support. In effect, the prime minister is chosen by the king," he said.

The government says the 1980 referendum is still valid and the will of the people will not be changed.

"Nepal follows the middle path," said chief government spokesman Radhey Shyam Bista. "We rejected the one-party system of our northern neighbour, China, and the multiparty system of our southern neighbour, India."

"For us the monarchy is the only institution. Democracy can only grow with the co-operation of the monarch," he said. He credited 44-year-old Birendra, a graduate in political science from Harvard University, with ushering in "remarkable progress" in the mountainous kingdom of 18 million people, one of the poorest countries in the world.

Population

According to government figures, life expectancy has risen from 38 years in 1960 to 47 at present and about 70,000 Nepalese now receive university education.

Still, half the population lives in poverty, with a per capita annual income of \$150. More than 70 per cent of the population has no safe drinking water.

"I trace all economic problems to the political process," said analyst Panday. "It's a feudal economy and there are little freedoms everywhere with no regard to the people's needs."

Economic problems apart, the tone of the demonstrators appears to be getting more strident, and they have increasingly aimed criticism at the king, which is a punishable offence.

"Our king is trying to kill democracy," said Rishikesh Shaha, a former foreign minister, who fell out with the palace and left for India on Feb 7, saying he feared he would be arrested.

"He is trying to put the clock back... at a time when around the world the voice of freedom, the voice of democracy is getting stronger and stronger," Shaha said in an interview in the Indian capital, New Delhi. "You just can't talk about him. You are required to worship him. But the pro-democracy movement has gone very deep down into the hearts of the people," Shaha said.

"There is no question of turning back."

TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1526 — Spanish Army, using muskets for first time in war, rout French and Swiss forces at Pavia, Italy, as 14,000 men are slain in battle.
- 1530 — Charles V is crowned Holy Roman Emperor and King of Italy by Pope Clement VII at Bologna — the last imperial coronation by a pope.
- 1563 — Duke of Guise is killed at Orleans in French civil war.
- 1606 — Spain declares war on England.
- 1624 — Governor-General of India declares war on Burmese.
- 1651 — British East India Company territory is violated.
- 1655 — Egyptian forces begin landing in Morea, Greece.
- 1782 — By Treaty of Yanabu, ending Burmese war, Burmese ruler, Dharma and British resident is established at Ava.
- 1891 — China pays indemnity to Russia for return of Ili valley to northwest China.
- 1920 — Nazi party is organised in Germany.
- 1945 — Egypt's premier Ahmed Pasha is assassinated after announcing Egypt's declaration of war against Germany; US troops liberate Philippine capital of Manila from Japanese occupation during World War II.
- 1962 — At least 25 people, most of them Muslims, are slain during terrorist outbreak in Algiers.
- 1966 — Court by armed forces of Ghana deposes president Kwame Nkrumah while he is out of country en route to China.
- 1986 — US president Ronald Reagan requests that president Ferdinand E. Marcos of troubled Philippines step down after 20 years in power.
- 1989 — Japan's Emperor Hirohito is buried in misty forest after world leaders pay final respects.

Western isolation dreaded

Iran calls for release of hostages

NICOSIA, (Reuters): A call from Tehran for the release of Western hostages in Lebanon indicates Iran's fears that changes in the Eastern Europe are uniting the superpowers against it, political analysts said on Thursday.

The pro-government Tehran Times, in an editorial on Thursday, called unequivocally for the unconditional release of all captives. It lamented that the hostages had become a propaganda weapon for the West against Iran.

The hostage-taking, which the West blames on Tehran and its Lebanese surrogates, has been a major hurdle to improving Iran's relations with the West.

Releasing

Several reports have indicated Iran received money and arms in return for releasing American and French hostages over the past few years.

Iran denies a direct role in the abductions but admits to having a degree of influence over kidnappers of 17 Western hostages, including eight Americans and four Britons.

Analysts said the Tehran Times' call was significant because it followed President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's gloomy assessment of greater pressures on Iran from increasingly united and largely hostile world powers.

It also came after talks in Tehran with senior officials of Hezbollah (party of God), the Shiite Muslim group widely believed to be behind the kidnapping of Westerners in Lebanon.

"I wouldn't expect an early return of the hostages, but the (Tehran Times) article takes on added meaning when you put it next to what Rafsanjani said the other day," one analyst said.

Speech

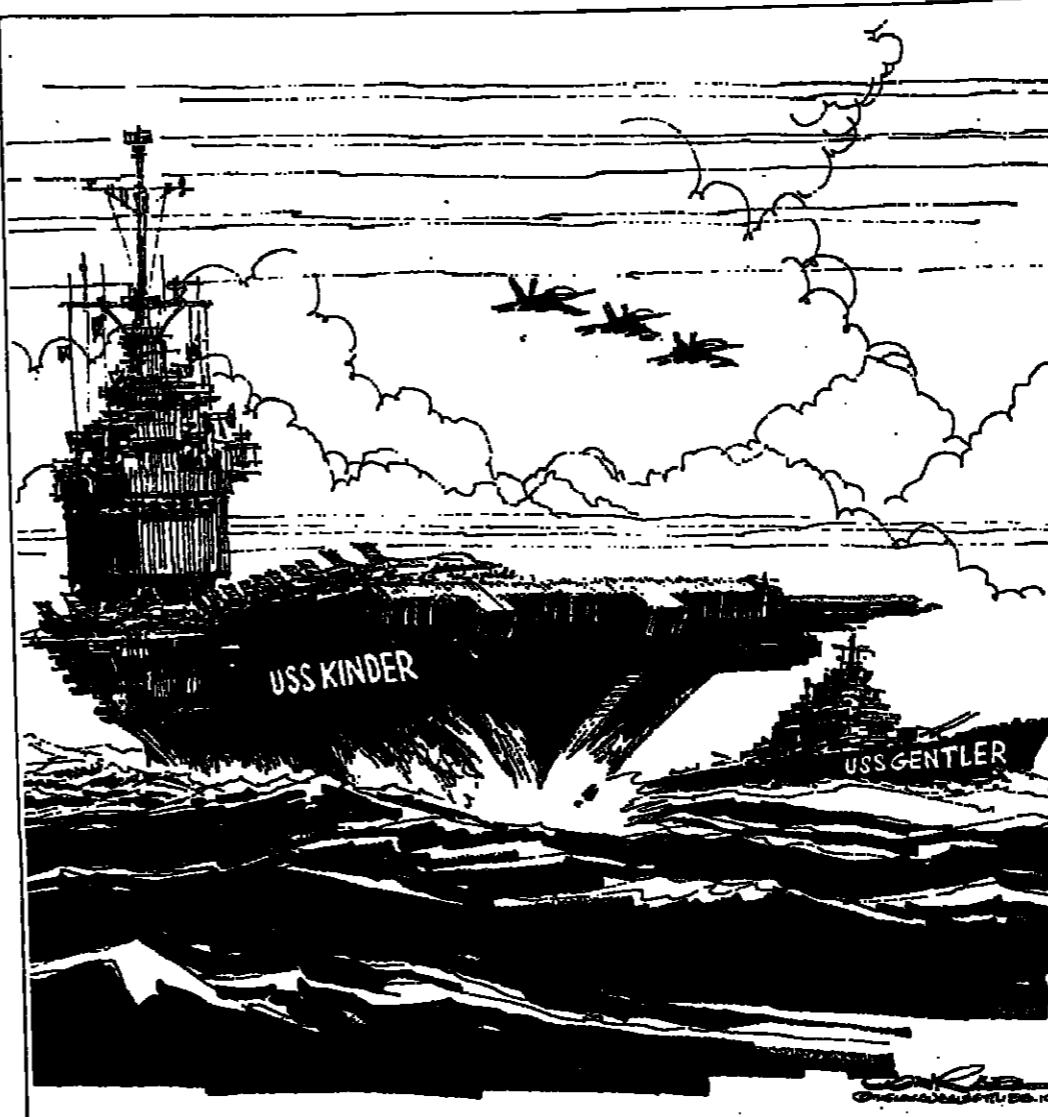
On Tuesday Rafsanjani, in a speech to parliament, said changes sweeping Eastern Europe may well make Iran more vulnerable.

"Many of the opportunities that independent nations had to make use of confrontation of big powers are vanishing," he said.

"Confrontations are turning into understandings which, in general, would give more leeway to those who are hostile to us."

The analysts said Rafsanjani's assessment could push Iran towards seeking a quick end to the hostage crisis to get on with the task of rebuilding its economy.

But he noted that previous Rafsanjani initiatives



to resolve the crisis had faltered amid opposition by hardliners such as former Interior Minister Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, who has close links with Lebanese militants.

Another Iranian analyst said the key element in the Tehran Times editorial was its admission that the hostage issue, whatever its original benefits, was now hurting Iran.

Perestroika hurting Muslims

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia. (Reuters): Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's political reforms pose an acute dilemma for leaders of the world's one billion Muslims.

They welcome Gorbachev's perestroika (restructuring) and glasnost (openness) because they make for a better life for Muslim communities in the Soviet Union.

But the prospect of a mass exodus of Soviet Jews, mainly to Israel, strikes at the heart of traditional Muslim support for the Palestinian struggle for national rights.

Political analysts say Muslims and Arabs are trying not to antagonise their traditional allies in

Moscow in any way that might adversely affect Muslims living in the Soviet Union, while seeking to ward off the spectre of a "greater Israel" made possible by a sudden influx of Jews.

Perestroika

I must say that we are satisfied with perestroika... enabling (Soviet) Muslims to express their views and practise their rites," said Hamid Al Gabid, secretary-general of the 46-member Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

But he told a news conference in Jeddah this month that Jewish emigration was "the most serious situation which the (Middle East) region faces now and in the future as it is intended to bring about a

basic demographic change."

Muslim countries fear the 1.7 million Palestinians living under Israeli occupation may eventually be swamped by Israeli settlers, reinforced by a huge influx of Soviet Jews.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Muslim world view the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank as the site of a future Palestinian state.

The PLO this week warned that Israel's settlement of 200 Soviet-Jewish immigrants near the West Bank town of Nablus was "an act of war" which would provoke retaliation.

Letters to the editor

South Commission

SIR: South Commission is pragmatically keeping the Third World flame alive.

Julius Nyerere, the chairman of the South Commission of the Non-Aligned Movement, is a dynamic doer. After years of service to Tanzania as president of the republic, he assumed the presidency of the South Commission in 1987.

He came through Kuwait the other day to attend the preliminary meeting for the South-South Commission.

His services to the South are commendable. The establishment of the commission itself has a lot to do with the personal interest of Nyerere. He has always been a great contributor and personally known keen-

The commission set-up has been talked about for the last 25 years and the one thing preventing it from taking place was the idea that Southern countries wouldn't put their money where their mouth is, as once formed, it is one of the few organisations still flying the flag for developing countries, especially when we see that the talk of the new international economic order and the Third World concept is really fading, it is nice to see the workings of the South Commission who has the ambitious task of charting a way forward for developing countries after what is widely regarded as the "lost decade" of the developing nations.

The South Commission most probably will establish into a permanent commission as a counterpart to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which acts as a sort of secretariat for the industrialised countries.

In absence of a permanent secretariat for developing countries in international conferences, the position of development nations is quite weakened. Even the strongest developing nations cannot match the political and economic clout provided by OECD.

One of the recent contributions to the South Commission was when at a conference of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the commission issued a briefing paper which outlined the issues at stake and their implications for developing countries.

Conference

The commission paper helped the developing nations' ambassadors in Geneva at the GATT conference, as it pointed out the industrialised countries' demand for open markets were in fact a charter for multinational and trans-national to act even more outside the control of host governments than they do at present.

The commission is, however, at pains to point out that it is a doer. They don't want their reports to end up in bureaucratic cycles.

The commissioners representing 28 countries are all from Economic South and all its funds have been provided by 50 developing countries, even a small country like, Burkina Faso, contributed.

The present committee meeting in Kuwait was aimed at giving priority to South-South trade and highlighting issues of environment which affect the developing countries.

Dr Manmohan Singh is the secretary-general of the commission. In his own words he talks about commission work "through a continuous communication effort".

The commission is also working on the transfer of technology from the North to the South and, in this field, the influence of Commissar Abdus Salam, Nobel-prize winner in physics from Pakistan, cannot be denied.

According to Dr Singh, the commission aims to be radical in addressing the current buzz words of "self-reliance, equity and sustainability," but will be practical in its approach. In light of this pragmatic approach, self-reliance will not mean autarchy, but building up the ability to withstand external changes

and shocks. Equity does not mean absolute equality but, rather, covering basic needs for all, together with a determined effort to reduce inequality.

The task of representing developing countries on the diplomatic front is taken up by Nyerere. Commending in 1989 in the inaugural address of President Bush of his country's mission to "make gentler the face of the world" and "of opening the door to prosperity," Nyerere very eloquently proposed in his words, "Will the door to prosperity be open to make the world gentler for the poor?" He has, since then, become champion to the cause of the poor bringing to the notice of the industrialised world the economics that have crumbled and living standards which are steadily

He has highlighted the cause of the sub-Saharan Africans who have specially been hit by man-made and natural disasters. The declining of life expectancy, hunger and malnutrition, and death of half a million children last year, declares Nyerere, is all due to the economic conditions of the South.

I believe that these leaders recognise that 70 per cent of the world population faces grim economic challenges in the coming decades, and in an effort to avert disasters, the developing nations must get together and take profound cultural, political and social changes for which the industrial world should extend their cooperation.

Last but not least, the role of Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development and ex-finance minister, Abdul Latif Al Hamad, in conducting the South Commission meeting here needs appreciation of the highest order.

Iqbal Latif,
Kuwait.

TV programmes

SIR: I am a regular viewer of KTV 2 programmes and enjoy almost all the programmes.

I saw recently the following family stories shown and enjoyed them and I would like to see more family stories like the following:

1) May Be Baby

2) Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore (Cine Club)

3) Miss Annie Rooney

4) The Shirale (Best Seller)

The Roving Report is always shown before 7.00 pm and I feel that most of the viewers would not be at home before 7.30 pm. So I will be happy if "Roving Report" is shown after English news and I don't know why they have shifted this programme ahead of the news.

I have also observed that English news is shown for only 20 minutes as news is vital part of the TV programme. I will be happy if the authorities allot more time for news.

There is no musical programme on TV. Some years ago KTV was showing pop music on Thursday nights for an hour. I request the KTV authorities to include some English music programmes also.

I have noticed the programmes have been greatly improved on KTV 2.

Peaceful land of Kuwait is celebrating National Day this week and I take the opportunity of conveying my congratulations to our leaders and I wish that future years will bring more prosperity, peace and happiness to Kuwait.

Long Live Kuwait and its people.

H.S. Rao,
Kuwait.

ALL Letters to the Editor must contain the writer's name and address. Publication is at the discretion of the Editor and letters are subject to the editing process for space or other reasons.

ARAB TIMES, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1984

PM reflects Irish unity

DUBLIN, (Reuters): Watching the Berlin Wall being torn down live on television, Irish Prime Minister Charles Haughey could not help wondering "why not us next?"

Reflecting on the two Soviet cosmonauts who returned to Earth this week from five months in space, he thought how astonished they must have been at the changes since they left.

"As somebody who comes from a divided country, a partitioned country, I have a sentimental attachment to the idea of German unity," he told Reuters in an interview to mark Ireland's current presidency of the European Economic Community (EEC).

"All over Europe they are showing what can happen when barriers are thrown down that have kept people apart. Surely we in Ireland should take a lesson from that and see if we could not tear down the barriers of mistrust and prejudice that have kept us apart," he said.

The outlawed Irish Republican Army guerrilla group has battled for 20 years to end British rule in Northern Ireland and unite the province with the Irish Republic. Almost 3,000 people have died in this, one of the world's longest-running guerrilla conflicts.

Haughey, a fervent nationalist who has branded

BUSINESS SURVEY OF KUWAIT

AN ARAB TIMES SUPPLEMENT ON ECONOMY, BANKING AND INVESTMENT

Bank merger move vital: Sheikh Salem

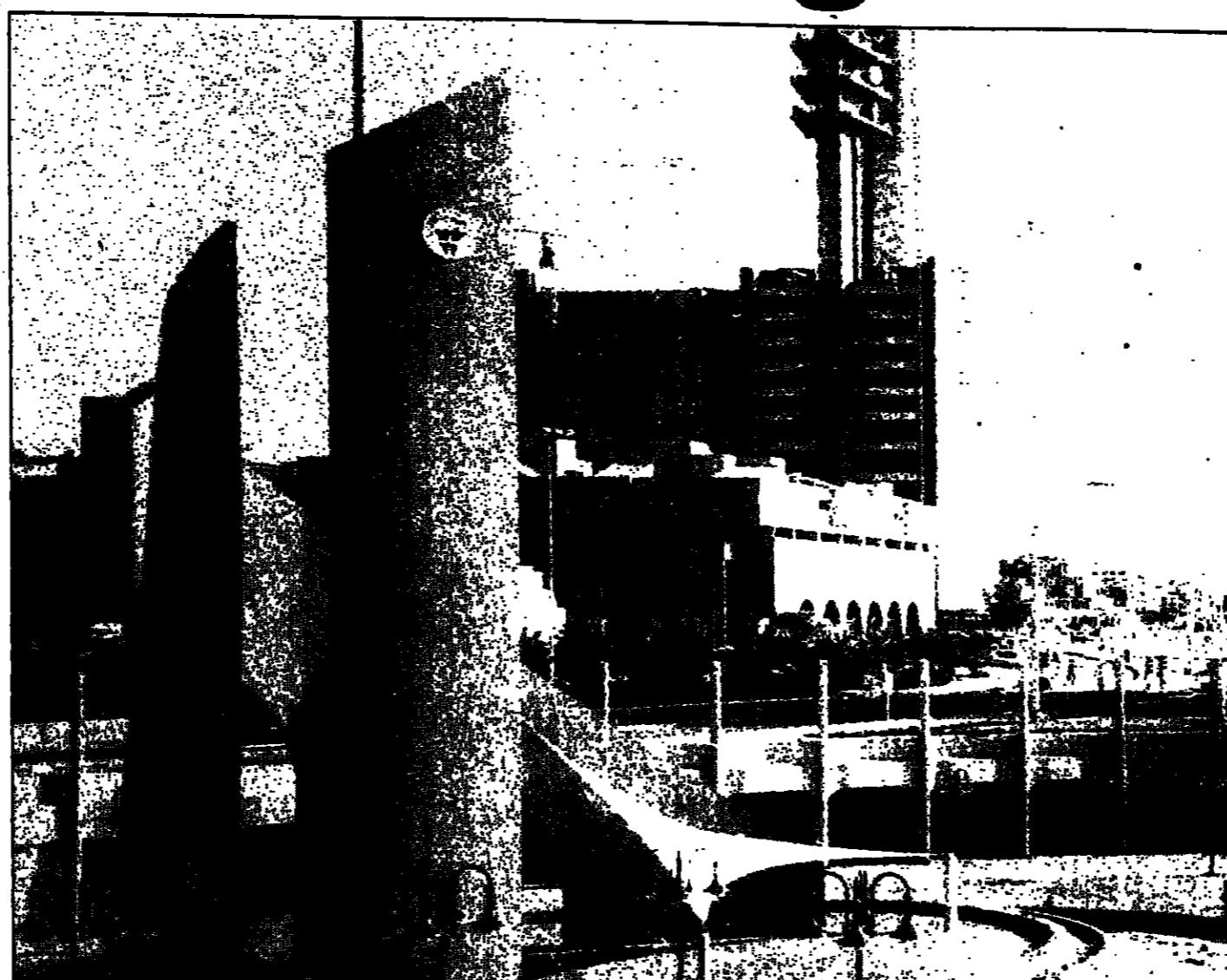
Kuwait sets new goals



Sheikh Salem Abdul Aziz Al Sabah

The Council of Ministers formed a committee headed by the governor of Kuwait Central Bank Sheikh Salem Abdul Aziz Al Sabah to co-ordinate with the various concerned bodies for the activation of the country's economy. The committee expressed hope on the amalgamation of efforts to crystallise constructive co-operation among all bodies to achieve the goals in activating economic cycle and boosting national economy.

M.C. Bose, the Business Editor of the Arab Times interviewed the Central Bank Governor last week. Here is the full text of the wide-ranging interview.



Safat Square: a new spirit lives on

Photo by Saeed Al Khalidi

Question: There are signs that business confidence in Kuwait has been reawakened notably in the banking sector and financial markets. Are you satisfied with the pace at which this process is proceeding?

Answer:

There is no doubt that our economy is based on solid and sound foundations.

Recently the government has taken measures for the enhancement of the economic situation. Concerning the banking sector and the financial markets, confidence in them was reinforced as a result of various resolutions and measures taken to protect the system, especially the Difficult Credits Settlement Programme.

This confidence has steadily increased due to the government's serious intention to activate the economic situation and tackle the banks' positions in a comprehensive way, as was explained clearly in the recommendations included in the Joint Economic Committee Report.

Although I am satisfied with the performance levels of the banking system, I am still looking forward to achieve better levels.

Q: Kuwait has announced that it will write off at least \$100 million owed by investors to help commercial banks grapple with more than \$4 billion in bad debts. Could you explain this move?

A: I think you mean settlement of debtors up to KD250,000. The Joint Economic Committee Report included various recommendations in this regard, including the settlement of clients credit up to KD250,000 through possessing their mortgaged assets and writing off these debts. According to the Central Bank data, the number of these clients counts about 2.5 per cent of the programme's total clients, whereas their debts amount to KD35 million, of which KD15 million are against collateral. This means the debts which will be cancelled after the bank's possession of collateral will amount to KD40 million.

Q: Do you also think this will lift a burden from about 50 per cent of individuals in the current credit facilities settlement programme and allow them to focus more clearly on current business opportunities?

A: Yes. I believe both the banks and the debtors will have a burden lifted from them. They will have the time and stability needed to focus on their business opportunities.

Q: The move is part of a blueprint for overhauling the country's economy and includes activation of the relatively dormant stock market and encouragement of the private sector and its role. What is your reaction to this?

A: As I mentioned in my answer to the second question, all proposals regarding improving the effectiveness of the Difficult Debts Settlement Programme, including the recommendations concerning settlement of debts up to KD250,000 and set-

lements of the debts which exceed this amount, represent a package of measures which will be used along with other recommendations to activate the economy, including the stock market, the stock market. Moreover, there will be other measures for the expansion of the private sector's role in the economy.

Q: There was a report that the number of debtors under the difficult loans settlement programme is about 1,350 debtors and establishments, about 54.2 per cent of them owe the banks only KD55 million. Do you agree with this?

A: I mentioned in my answer to the second question that the total of the clients' debts which do not exceed KD250,000 amount to KD55 million, and that the number of these clients is about 54 per cent of the total clients in this programme. These data were included in the Joint Economic Committee Report.

Q: Your Excellency, do you think it is necessary to carry out strict investigations in the financial positions of big debtors before applying any settlement to them?

A: The recommendations mentioned in the Joint Economic Committee Report pertaining to the improvement of the programme's effectiveness are based on the same rules and grounds of the Difficult Debts Settlement Programme.

Therefore, settlement of clients debts, whether to the extent of KD250,000 or more, will be done according to reliable and well-investigated financial positions of the clients. This is a major condition for performing these settlements and one of the main pillars of the settlement programme.

Q: Kuwait exudes a new-found confidence and the overall growth prospects of its economy is rather good. Could you please comment?

A: As I mentioned before, confidence in the Kuwaiti economy is strong, and it is increasing as a result of the Joint Economic Committee Report recommendations, which emphasised the government's intention to activate the economic situation. In addition, the Kuwaiti economy has, in the last three years, achieved good growth rates in the some sectors, while other sectors have improved. Despite this, we aspire

to achieve better growth rates. Q: There was a report that some of the local banks and financial institutions are planning to merge or integrate in order to strengthen their overall growth rate and cost-cutting drive?

A: Perhaps you mean the report of the Joint Economic Committee which I referred to before. Among its recommendations, the report referred to the importance of evaluating the performance of many enterprises in order to decide on whether to merge them or enhance their capital base, or even liquidating the weakest companies. These recommendations apply to all companies, including banks and other financial institutions.

The recommendations pertaining to improving the effectiveness of the Difficult Debt Settlement Programme pointed out the importance of bank mergers for cost savings or for establishing strong institutions capable of competing in the changing international environment.

Q: Do you think the merger move is vital to improve the performance of these banks? This move will also make some of the employees redundant?

A: Certainly, if the mergers are completed in an appropriate way and conform to certain standards, this will lead to positive results for the merged companies. It is not necessary that integration will lead to a redundancy in the number of employees. I think there could be more optimal employment for the present expertise and skills, and the integration will lead to a better redistribution of the manpower.

He said the bank has a "clear vision" of what should be done to upgrade the banking sector but he added that meeting this objective necessitates that Kuwait banks be run on sound rules and by efficient management.

Sheikh Salem noted that the banking sector could have been in a better position now had it not been for the difficult credit facilities that were the product of the 1982 crash of the unofficial stock market.

But he underlined the success of the bank's difficult credit facilities settlement programme, the overwhelming part of the problem had been solved.

Further steps will be taken in the near future, Sheikh Salem said and expressed hope they would yield fruitful results that would be felt by banks, clients and the economy in general.

Stressing that the banking sector was registering steady growth, the governor noted that the aggregate budget of Kuwaiti commercial banks rose from 4.3 billion Kuwaiti dinars to 19.79 in 1989, at a growth rate of 150 per cent.

Private sector deposits, a fundamental economic barometer, rose over the same period from about KD2 billion to the neighbourhood of KD5 billion, he said.

Sheikh Salem said the surge is "the best testimony to the continued confidence in our banking apparatus and in the security and firmness of the national economy."

In the 12 years ending 1989 the Central Bank budget rose from

about KD844 million to KD1.6 billion.

The rise reflected the central bank's growing role in the econ-

omic activities in light of its expanded dealings with the government and local and foreign banks.

Minister hints at new industry law

KUWAIT'S Commerce and Industry Minister Faisal Abdel Razak Al Khaled has said certain measures will soon be introduced in Kuwait to reinvigorate the country's stagnant economy during the 1980s.

In an interview with the London-based Al Sharq Al Awsat newspaper, Al Khaled said short-term and long-term measures to reactivate economy were derived from recommendations hammered out by a joint economic committee, comprising representatives from both the public and private sectors.

Al Khaled said his ministry was currently reviewing industry regulations in the country, indicating that a new industry law will be issued soon to cope with the objectives of the upcoming stage.

The minister said the boom of the Kuwaiti economy in early 1980s had revived dealing in the official stock exchange coupled with dealing in an unofficial stock exchange or the then known as Souk Al Manakh which attracted businessmen from among citizens of the Gulf Co-operation Council.

He added irresponsible behaviour of some dealers at that time had led to the 1982 crash in the stock exchange.

Al Khaled said his ministry was considering some amendments on the commercial law with a view to encourage establishment of share-holding companies in a bid to gather national savings for usage in financing investment activities in various sectors.

The Kuwaiti minister said the stock exchange committee was exerting efforts to diversify investment tools through encouraging trading in bonds and introduction of the invest-



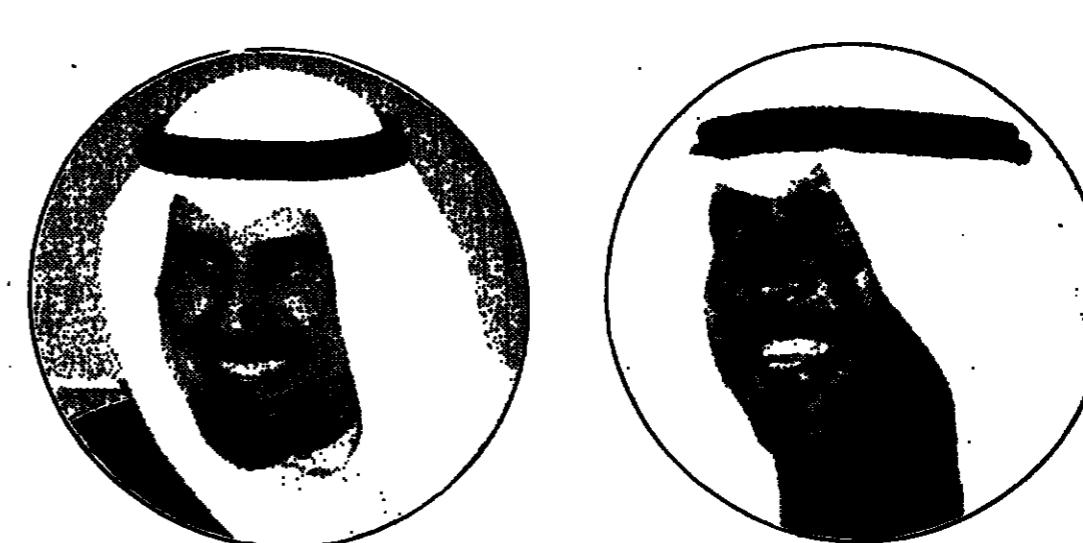
Al Khalid

ment funds system for trading by both the Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis.

He said the committee was planning to broaden the lease of participation at the stock exchange by allowing financial institutions to take part besides the individuals in the next decade.

Speaking about the impact of the merger of some companies and the clearance of their budgets from bad debts on the future of dealing during the 1990s, Al Khaled said such a move would create a new well-equipped economic unit capable of accomplishing the objectives of its very establishment.

Al Khaled outlined that registration of Kuwaiti, Arab or foreign companies in Kuwait bourse was subject to certain measures stipulated in the decision by the committee on the issue, saying other companies which did not meet the conditions for registration in the official market could register in the parallel market until their financial situations were improved.

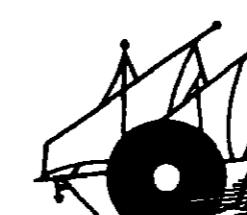


Heartiest Greetings

to

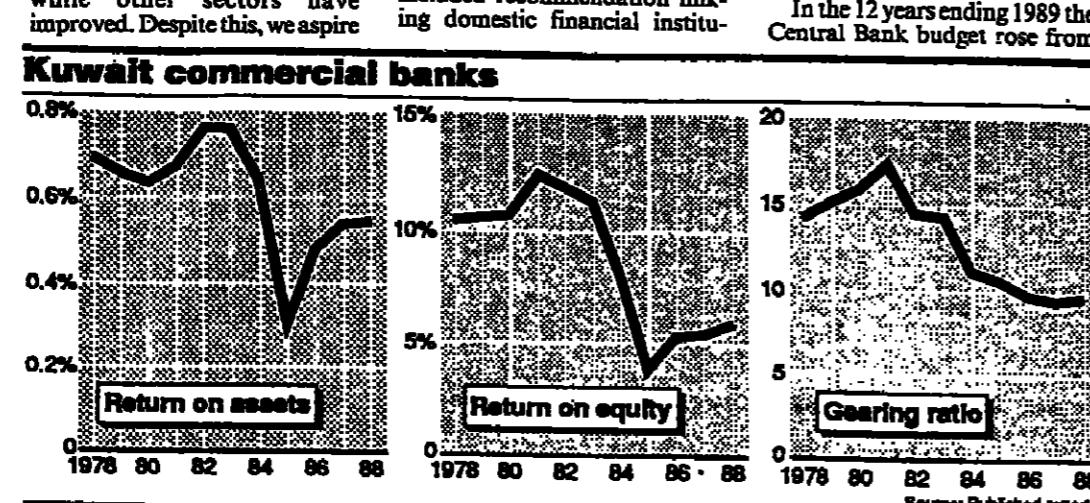
**His Highness the Amir
Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmed Al Sabah
and
Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah
and
the Government and the People of Kuwait
on the occasion of the**

29th NATIONAL DAY



Kuwait India International Exchange Company W.L.L.

CITY: Opp. Safat Post Office, Murgab, Tel: 2422699, 2422733, 2422765,
FAHAHEEL: Alghanim Bldg. No.1, Shop No. 28, Dabbous St., Tel: 3917353, 3926648
Tlx: KIESBI 44627 KT, KIESBI 44127 KT, FAX: 2405815



Looking forward to an era of prosperity and growth

Ambitious expansion plans



Dennis A. Stickley

DENNIS A. STICKLEY, the managing director and chief Executive of Mohamed Naser Al Sayer and Sons Est has said continued comments are made with regard to the business environment of Kuwait both internally and externally and these are usually on the down side and not particularly optimistic.

To a certain degree, the majority of problems have been self-induced either by bad management, lack of enthusiasm and a continuous trend of talking the business and the economy down. Recently one would have seen a very slight revival in the attitude and approach of both companies and customers to the domestic situation and a slight stirring and improvement in the environment.

Stickley said the business potential of Kuwait is possibly far greater than its neighbours particularly the most talked about being the United Arab Emirates. Because of an unwillingness to invest in domestic retailing businesses and small localised manufacturing units, due partially to the differences between Kuwait's two large neighbours has helped standards deteriorate below its neighbours who have continued to forge

ahead. This is particularly obvious in the motor and related businesses where the methods of retailing, servicing and supply of spare parts have remained comparatively stagnant over the last six to seven years.

The tremendous potential of a retailer or manufacturer within the motor and ancillary businesses within Kuwait are far greater than the majority of Gulf and near Middle Eastern countries with the exception of Saudi Arabia.

Stickley said with regard to Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Est the company has recently embarked on a very ambitious plan to bring its servicing and parts way ahead of its competition, both domestically and in neighbouring countries firstly by the introduction of sophisticated operating systems mainly based on online real-time computerisation and very heavy schedules of inhouse training utilising both internal and external expertise.

The total management structure of the company has changed within the last six months so as to bring it into the 20th century and again make it more efficient. The advantages to the customer will eventually be that the servicing of



Toyota showroom, Al Rai, Kuwait — a trend-setting facility.

a motor vehicle or the supply of spare parts will be less expensive than they are today and many times more efficient and reliable. Even to the purchasing of a motor vehicle this will be made easier and more comfortable to the potential customer.

"We look at the supply of tyres, batteries and ancillary items, these also will ultimately be supplied either directly through the company's retail outlets or through dealers at very competitive rates," Stickley added.

In the majority of areas customers have become used to a very sub-standard level of service, whether it be motor related or domestic supplies and services and it is necessary for companies of the size of Al Sayer and others to improve and raise that standard at least to a level which would be acceptable elsewhere in the world. The group of companies owned and operated under the name of Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Est are

dedicated to achieving this standard over the next three to five years and I would envisage that other companies will follow as the advantages would have been seen in operating efficient businesses and that customers begin to demand a higher standard than they have been used to over the last few years.

Stickley said: "My assumption is that the Kuwait domestic market is beginning to turn upward and over the next five years we will see some substantial

progress as the country becomes more commercially orientated. The biggest area of concern, is the loss of overseas trade and the very much diminished relationship with its traditional foreign traders and this must over the next few years be regained, this can only be achieved by allowing the import and export of goods from the country to flow freely and with as little bureaucratic influence as possible.

"For instance the establishment of a free trade zone within

Kuwait would go a tremendous way to easing and in improving the flow of trade between the state and the neighbouring countries. The encouragement of visitors to the country must also be seen as an ultimate goal for re-establishing Kuwait as a centre of trade for this area.

"The government, I quite appreciate had insurmountable external and internal economic situations to deal with and have handled the situation, to my view, extremely well over the

years and now that the situations are beginning to ease will, I am sure, allow for the expansion of business and trade both domestic and overseas.

"I believe Kuwait's future business prospects given the right direction are far greater than its Gulf neighbours particularly one particular country which seems, for the moment, to have progressed considerably in its world standing as a centre of trade and commerce for the area," Stickley said.



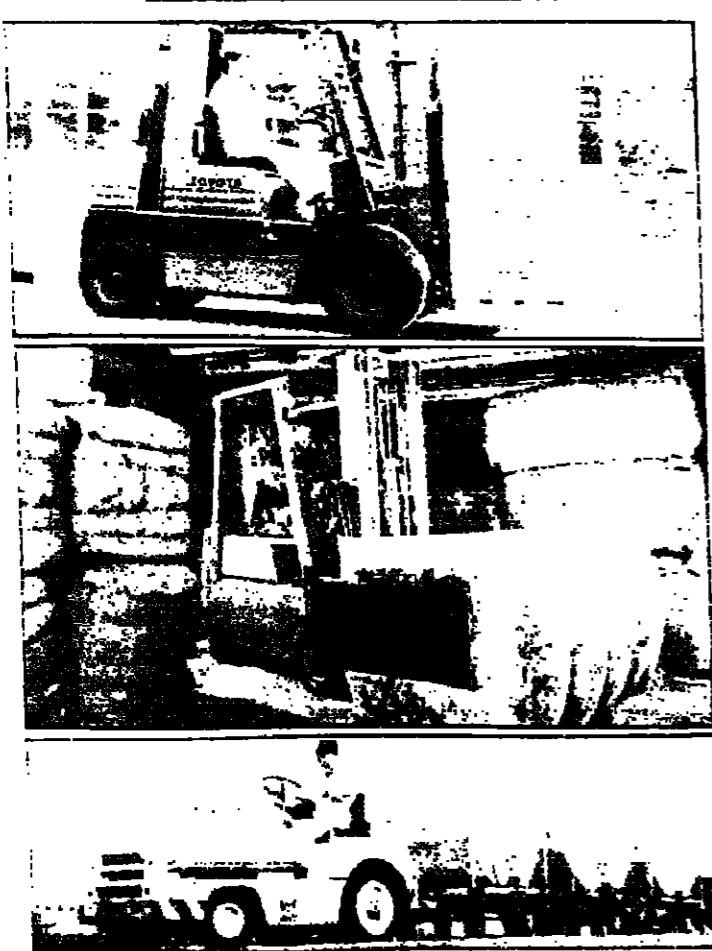
Lexus comfort means rich refinement. Finely upholstered, generously shaped seats offer smoothly contoured beauty as well as fatigue-free support. A feeling of well-being extends throughout the cabin, with tastefully upholstered trim, plush carpeting and numerous convenience features.



The relentless pursuit of perfection

Six years ago, Toyota began a relentless pursuit of perfection. It took 2,300 technicians, 1,400 engineers, 450 prototypes, 4.3 million test kilometres and hundreds of patents pending. The result was the Lexus LS400. The world's finest performance luxury Sedan.

Toyota industrial vehicles



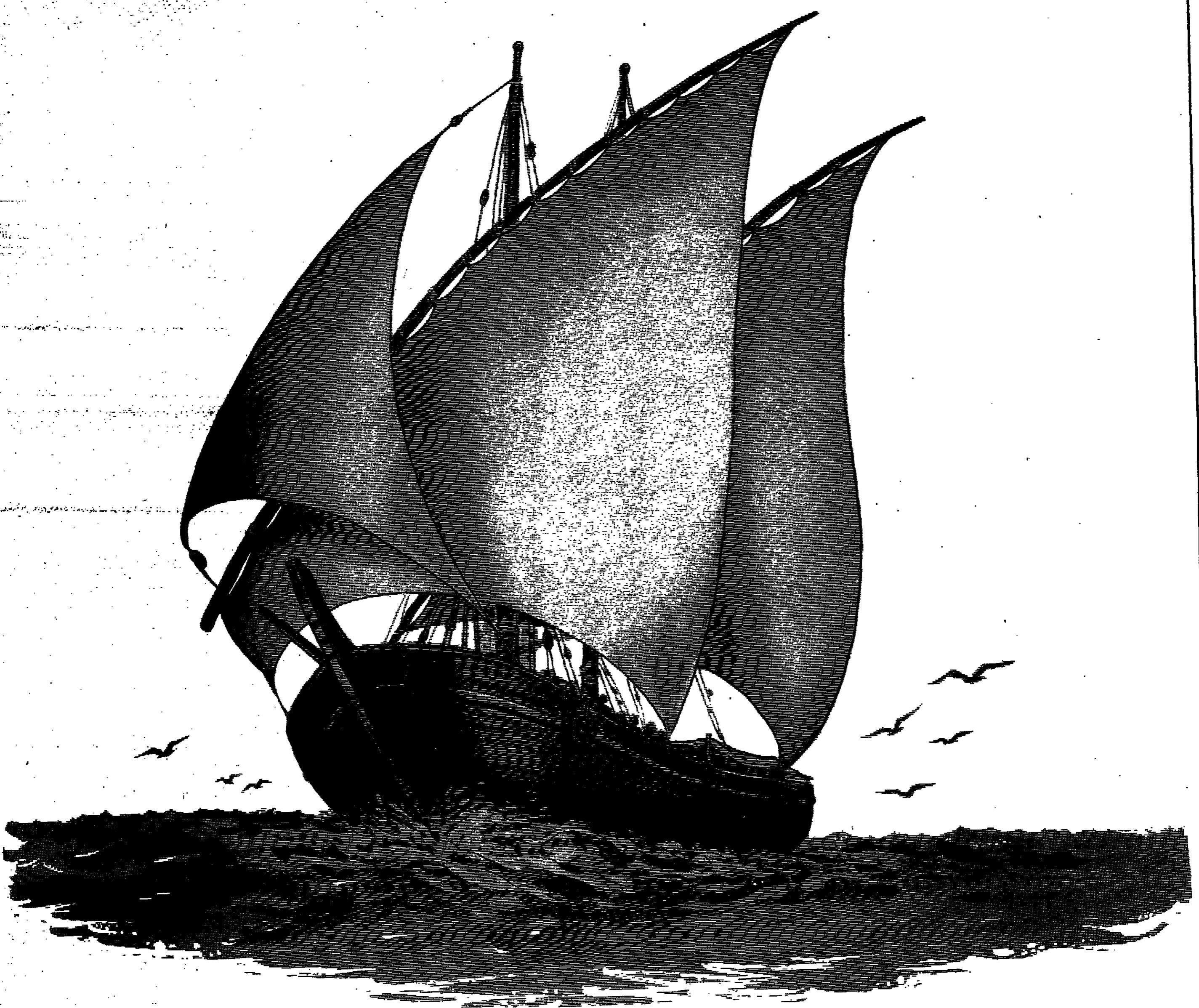
In addition to forklifts, Toyota offer a range of tough 4-wheel drive skid steer shovel loaders, conventional electric sweepers. They all bear the Toyota name, a name that has come to stand for quality, efficiency and long, trouble-free years of service. These industrial vehicles are popular because they were designed to fit into confined worksites, they also fit into budgets that are looking for maximum handling efficiency at minimal cost.

In the past...

Our cargo was priceless pearls

Today...

We carry good wishes
for the future prosperity of the people of Kuwait



Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons Est.

- Al-Sayer Soft Drinks Factory W.L.L.
- Bahrah Trading Company
- Kuwait Animal Feed Factory W.L.L.
- United Marketing Company

Committed to innovation: NBK



Mohammad Abdul Mohsin
Al Khorafi

By M.C. Bose
Business Editor

NATIONAL Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has had another record year in 1989 in terms of profitability and in achieving its strategic goals. The bank has recently announced net profits of KD35 million (\$120 million) for 1989 as compared to KD30.9 million (\$106 million) in 1988 and distributed 20 per cent cash dividends and 15 per cent bonus shares.

Mohammad Abdul Mohsin Al Khorafi, Chairman of the board of directors, NBK, told the Arab Times that the bank's consistency in achieving an outstanding performance can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, based on its essentially prudent business philosophy, the bank's policy has been to go after selective high quality assets, with a significant portion of its loan portfolio in the domestic market confined to the most productive sectors of the economy such as trade, construction and services. The bank also has an over 80 per cent market share in financing foreign businesses and contractors doing business in Kuwait.

Second, NBK has a solid clientele base in Kuwait and it controls nearly one third of private sector deposits. It provides a wide array of services including trade finance, investment management, treasury services and traditional wholesale and retail banking. Its large network of 51 branches in convenient locations provides it with a competitive edge over other banks. Using its domestic base, the bank is also building up relationships

Kuwait: Summary of Public Finance 1984/85 - 1989/90 (KD Million)												
1984/85 Closing Account	1985/86 Closing Account	% Chg.	1986/87 Closing Account	% Chg.	1987/88 Closing Account	% Chg.	1988/89 Closing Account	% Chg.	1988/89 Budget Est.	1989/90 Budget Est.	% Chg.	
A-REVENUES												
1. Oil	2345	-14.6	1731	-26.2	2252	30.1	2368	5.2	2055	2231	8.6	
2. Non-Oil	2994	+16.2	1484	-29.2	1991	34.2	2055	2.2	1789	1942	8.6	
3. Total	251	-0.2	247	-1.4	260	5.4	333	27.9	266	289	8.6	
B-INVESTMENT INCOME												
1. Current	1154	2493	116.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
a. Wages & Salaries	3204	3107	-3.0	-	2860	-7.9	2807	-1.5	3000	6.9	3444	3326
b. Goods & Services	2426	2381	-1.8	-	2238	-6.0	2252	0.6	221	12.0	2697	2566
c. Transport Equip	675	731	8.2	-	757	3.6	793	4.8	846	6.7	886	927
d. Training	362	283	-22.0	-	209	-29.9	220	5.5	222	0.8	264	261
2. Development	121	129	-6.8	-	21	-15	20	-3	26	2.6	28	7.7
Ministry of Pub. Works	1348	1333	-1.1	-	1252	-6.1	1219	-2.6	1433	17.6	1511	1350
Ministry of Electr.	628	656	-10.0	-	502	-11.2	455	-9.4	379	-16.7	607	560
Ministry of Communicat.	176	218	23.9	-	174	-20.2	118	-32.2	112	-5.1	211	204
Other	366	305	-16.7	-	268	-12.1	283	-5.6	204	-27.9	331	264
3. Land Purchase	46	14	-69.6	-	21	-50.0	19	-9.5	12	-36.8	23	0.0
D. Capital Allocations	150	161	7.3	-	120	-25.5	100	-16.7	100	0.0	150	200
E. BALANCE	305	265	-13.1	-	173	-34.7	225	-30.1	237	5.3	205	223
1. Stricto sensu (A-C)	-459	-762	66.0	-	-1129	48.2	-555	-50.9	-632	13.9	-1389	-1095
2. "Official" (A-C-D)	-764	-1027	34.4	-	-1302	26.8	-780	-40.1	-869	11.4	-1594	-1318
3. Overall (A + B + C)	693	1731	149.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

with prime clients around the Gulf. Third, the bank places strong emphasis on providing high quality services. Under its "relationship banking programme," the various services are delivered at the discretion of personal and private banking officers. Also, constant efforts are being made to innovate new products and services in order to meet the varied banking requirements of its clients.

Finally, NBK believes that banking is a people industry. Hence its approach involves developing a core of innovative and efficient bankers totally committed to the profession, so as to fully serve the interests of its customers. As a result, NBK's training centre has been gaining regional recognition for its efforts to develop the bank's human resources element.

Khorafi said NBK's main contribution in the last 10 years has been to finance, and act as an intermediary in, two major areas, viz. trade and investment flows between the Gulf and the rest of the world.

At present the bank has physical presence in London, New York, Paris, Singapore, Geneva and Bahrain. Ever since the bank started its overseas expansion, the strategy has been to establish an international presence only where it could clearly enhance its capability to serve the bank's customers in Kuwait and the Gulf. The bank's business in these centres caters largely to the interests of customers with whom the bank has had a long relationship and whose needs and requirements are well understood by the bank. Our strategy in international expansion is

thus based on the essential feature of Kuwait's dependence on foreign markets for its trade and investment needs. In order to meet this objective, the bank has recently introduced the Watani International Transfer System (WITS), which is a US dollar clearing system utilised by local and regional institutional clients to clear their dollar transactions through NBK's New York branch.

Replies to a question on the overall prospects about Kuwait economy, the chairman said the overall outlook for the Kuwaiti economy in 1990 is encouraging. While the post-Gulf war peace and the relative stability in crude oil prices are seen as positive external factors, internally, the government's implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Economic Commission and the prospects for resolving the problem of non-performing loans, should provide a conducive environment for economic revival.

The measures suggested by the Joint Economic Commission are aimed at removing the difficulties confronting the non-oil sectors which contribute to nearly 60 per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product. Measures such as increasing private sector participation in the implementation of housing projects, creating new investment funds, revising retail trade legislation and improving the ports' procedures, as well as effecting a speedy decision to the introduction of free trade zones are expected to stimulate the activities of trade, finance and real estate sectors.

The recommendation for increased protection from foreign competition will also provide some support to selected companies in the manufacturing sector. Further, the government's decision to implement major projects such as the Sabaya power station, the Iraq water pipeline, and several other infrastructure projects and the increased emphasis on housing activity should help promote the contracting and trade sectors.

Khorafi said the Central Bank's Difficult Credit Facilities Settlement Programme has done much to restore confidence in the banking sector.

Programme although their debts amount to only 2.5 per cent of the total owed. This measure is expected to have some effect in inspiring confidence within the local business community.

Finally, with the banks freed from the administrative burden of most of the problem loans, one can hope to see their managements diverting their attention to the economy's more productive sectors.

Speaking about the opportunities for the banks in the Gulf, Khorafi said the prospects for an improvement in the performance of Gulf banks in the 1990s look better particularly as most of them have been able to overcome the problem of non-performing loans. As far as business opportunities are concerned high income from the region's oil resources had provided many banking opportunities in the past, particularly those relating to the financing of imports, construction, and real estate. In the absence of such large lending opportunities at present, banks may have to strive hard to develop their banking business within their home market.

It may be noted that retail markets in some of these countries are not fully exploited. Commercial banks are intensifying their market research in order to better understand the banking needs of the customers of the region, and to develop appropriate products and services required by various segments of clients. Attractive possibilities have been identified in various types of deposit products, consumer loans and investment services.

In this context that the Joint Economic Commission has recommended the write-off of non-performing loans owed by small borrowers with less than KD250,000 loans. This measure will involve nearly 54.2 per cent of the total number of debtors registered under the Settlement

GULF economies are reaping some fruits of peace one year after the Iran-Iraq ceasefire but the boom predicted by many has failed to materialise, according to Reuter.

It was widely believed at the time that the ceasefire last Aug.

New-found confidence

Steady sustainable pace

By M.C. Bose



SHEIKH Ahmed Abdullah Al Ahmed Al Sabah, the Chairman and Managing Director of Burgan Bank has said we have entered the 1990s on a new note of optimism. The 1980s might be characterised by the Iraq-Iran war, regional recession, and falling oil prices. Now, the war is over, the regional economy is recovering, and oil prices are firmer. On a global scale, economic liberalisation in Eastern Europe, the prospects of an integrated EEC economy after 1992, and other developments all point to a stronger world economy over the coming years. In addition, the recommendations of the Joint Committee are positive for Kuwait. Among other things, the recommendations demonstrate the strength of the government's desire to reactivate the local economy. It is not surprising that Kuwait is exuding new-found confidence.

In reply to a question whether business confidence in Kuwait has been reawakened notably in the banking sector and financial markets, the chairman said: "I agree that business confidence is strengthening, particularly in the banking and financial sector. We need to keep this moving at a steady sustainable pace. Too rapid a change in perceptions could lead to speculative gains and losses."

Speaking about the opportunities for the banks in the Gulf, Khorafi said the prospects for an improvement in the performance of Gulf banks in the 1990s look better particularly as most of them have been able to overcome the problem of non-performing loans. As far as business opportunities are concerned high income from the region's oil resources had provided many banking opportunities in the past, particularly those relating to the financing of imports, construction, and real estate. In the absence of such large lending opportunities at present, banks may have to strive hard to develop their banking business within their home market.

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government move to overhaul country's economy and activation of the relatively dormant stock and market and private sector role, the chairman said government measures to encourage the private sector are to be applauded. Experience in other countries suggests that the private sector is generally better at running business enterprises than the public sector, but that business can be assisted with appropriate guidance and information from the government. (Measures to protect local industry from outside competition have a less certain effect. They could result in Kuwaitis paying more than necessary for some goods and services — and in certain Kuwaiti companies lacking the expertise to compete internationally.)

Speaking about the difficult debt settlement programme Sheikh Ahmed said proposals on the table recommend writing off debts for amounts under KD250,000. This would remove a burden from up to 54 percent of debtors in the difficult credit facilities settlement programme and allow them to focus more clearly on new business opportunities.

When asked to comment on

Reactivation of the stock market would follow naturally from a generalised economic recovery. The stock market in Kuwait is especially important for its position in collecting investment funds and channelling them to industry.

Turning to merger move, Sheikh Ahmed said merging banks in Kuwait would reduce duplication of effort and introduce economies of scale.

This will probably — but not necessarily — result in scope for a reduction in overall staffing levels. I expect that in large part the banks will be able to handle this through natural wastage. There is a natural turnover in expatriate staff as contracts are concluded and they move on to new jobs elsewhere. "I believe that the government already puts a good proportion of its foreign operations through the local banks. If they are efficient and competitive, then they will automatically win this business," the chairman added.

Talking about growth prospects of GCC banks he said many of the factors which will help Kuwait in the 1990s (a more peaceful outlook in the Gulf, a recovery in the regional economy and activity and trade, and firmer oil prices) will also help GCC banks. Thus, their outlook for the 1990s has improved from that of the previous year. About Burgan Bank's future plans, the chairman said the main thrust of our current strategy is to expand our international operations in the 1990s. We are very aware of the changes that will result from EEC integration in 1992, from economic and social liberalisation in Eastern Europe, and from the starting economic growth of the newly industrialised countries on the Pacific rim. We intend to achieve direct international representative offices, branches or subsidiaries as appropriate.

We are also well aware of demographic and other changes taking place in the Kuwaiti economy, and we are actively using national manpower to meet the challenges of the 1990s. We hope that some of the changes mooted for Kuwaiti legislation will enable us to introduce new products for our clients in Kuwait.

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Opec moving to comply with pact

OPEC President and Algerian Oil Minister Sadek Boussena said the group was progressively implementing its latest output pact which sets a ceiling of 22 million barrels daily.

"Apparently countries are in the process of applying the accord progressively, and that has had an impact on the market," he told Algerian radio in an interview.

"There are countries which have not completely pulled back to their quotas, but for the moment all countries are in the process of respecting progressively their quotas."

He excluded the United Arab Emirates, which declined to sign the pact because it did not accept its output quota.

The accord, reached last November in Vienna, went into effect on January 1 and sought to strengthen world prices by cutting production by some two million barrels daily.

Algeria is a member of the eight-country Opec monitoring committee which is to meet in Vienna next month to assess implementation of the pact.

Boussena said world oil prices had risen above the group's \$18 a barrel benchmark because of rising world demand.

"There is a slight improvement in prices, and the conditions of

today are such that all things being equal we are not likely to see the difficulties of 1986-88," he said, referring to weak world oil prices during much of that period.

"There is now a certain pick-up, and a growing share for Opec oil," he said.

Boussena automatically became Opec president when former president Rilwan Lukman left his post as Nigerian Oil Minister late last year.

Kuwait's Oil Minister Sheikh Ali Khalifa has said that Opec's oil output quota system should be abolished as soon as possible, because the system was no longer adequate.

Sheikh Ali's call to abolish the quota system was the first by a minister from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries since the 13-nation organization adopted the quota system in the early 1980s, as a way to boost prices on world markets. At the time, world oil markets were suffering from overproduction which led to a sharp drop in prices.

"From the practical standpoint, they are already irrelevant, so all that is needed is a recognition of that fact," Sheikh Ali told the Nicosia, Cyprus-based Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) in an



Sheikh Ali

interview.

The oil ministers of Opec, at their last meeting held last November, set an output ceiling of 22.1 million barrels per day. But oil industry sources reported January's Opec output exceeded the ceiling by at least one million barrels per day.

Sheikh Ali told MEES that his country was producing above its pre-decreed quota of 1.5 million barrels per day, but declined to give any figures.

"I think that our obligation to stay within the quota applies when the price of the Opec basket is below \$18 per barrel," MEES quoted Sheikh Ali as saying.

"If the price is above \$18 a barrel, I think everyone should be, and even encouraged to be, producing above quota," Sheikh Ali added.

The Kuwaiti oil minister said demand for Opec crude had been very strong, and predicted that demand was likely to keep growing faster than predicted, "to the extent that only a few countries will have excess production capacity still to be utilized."

Sheikh Ali pledged that his country would never do anything to destabilize the oil market. "We do not want prices too low, because even if we can survive with them, other Opec countries and oil-producing developing countries may be hurt too much."

Sheikh Ali also said Kuwait was opposing too high prices, because that would make its oil harder to sell. Kuwait is producing heavy crude oil containing a high percentage of sulphur.

"So we have not hesitated to increase and reduce our production above or below quota, when the need arises," Sheikh Ali said.

Meanwhile, Opec Secretary-General Subroto sees a new era of international co-operation between oil producers and consumers. He said in an interview that on a recent tour of the European Economic Community, Japan and the United States he found "complete agreement" on various issues between Opec and the governments of industrialized countries.

The Organization of

Petroleum Exporting Countries chief, described a meeting with 20 members of the US congressional committee on national energy security as "a milestone in the history of the oil industry."

"For the first time in the history of the oil industry, an Opec representative met with American decision-makers," he said.

He described the meeting as the first step toward a dialogue between oil exporters and importers.

"I found that they looked toward Opec differently now ... and they no longer consider it a danger against them," he said.

"They also welcomed Opec's effort in maintaining the stability of the oil market," he said, referring to the organization's attempt to restrict output to stabilize oil prices around a benchmark of \$18 a barrel.

'Opec-EEC dialogue realistic'

Poised for structural shifts

THE EEC-Opec dialogue has been effective because its scope is limited to energy and petroleum issues, said an editorial in the latest issue of Opec's monthly bulletin.

Commenting on the recent Opec and European Economic Community (EEC) dialogue in Brussels, the editorial says it has provided an opportunity to review the energy-related developments of a decade adding that a new set of parameters has been introduced reflecting structural shifts in economic and political spheres.

The steps it has adopted towards co-operation are practical and realistic, says the publication, adding that the annual meetings of the two groups have always provided an "insight" into the evolution of thought behind events.

The editorial points out that such meetings have always kept the reality of co-operation alive, exemplified by a readiness to exchange information, provide training and conduct joint studies, projects and seminars.

The annual meetings may provide a forum for monitoring the evolution of awareness about the environment, the publication says, pinpointing that Kuwait-based Opec is concerned that the measures taken to regulate and clean up energy-related pollution should follow a balanced approach.



Hisham Nazer

The publication says the petroleum industry in the 1980s was on "a roller-coaster" ride, with fluctuating oil prices exercising a far-reaching impact on Opec economies.

Opec member states have absorbed more than their share of supply cutback in a "futile attempt" to maintain the price levels achieved in the early 1970s, and it is "time for all oil producers to share the responsibility for bringing about market stability," it says.

The editorial said investment by Opec members in the European refining industry "added new dimensions to the

mutual interest already existing between the EEC and Opec."

This was a reference to the takeover of refining and distribution operations in EEC countries.

Kuwait purchased and operates two refineries, one in the Netherlands and one in Denmark with a total capacity of 125,000 barrels a day, as well as about 3,000 petrol stations.

Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Hisham Nazer recently disclosed that his country, the world's largest oil exporter, was seeking joint ventures in downstream operations in Europe as well as in Asia. Saudi Arabia's first such venture was in the United States in 1988.

Opec groups 11 Arab oil producers. Seven of them — Algeria, Kuwait, Iraq, Libya, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia — also are members of Opec, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

The other four are Bahrain, Egypt, Syria and Tunisia.

The Arab world has long sought closer co-operation with EEC. But some Opec members have been complaining about EEC tariffs on their nascent petrochemical sales to the community.

They also are concerned about the impact of the single European market that will emerge in 1992.

Mild boost for Gulf economy

Despite the slow start, bankers say the region's economies are finally getting a mild boost.

Bankers said renewed confidence had sparked a small inflow of new investment and a return of capital. There are also signs that reconstruction material is now beginning to pass through local ports.

Kuwait, the port thought best-placed to take advantage of the reconstruction of Iraq's shattered southern cities, saw significant amount of trade-bound bulk cargo beginning in April, shipping operators said.

The recent cargo has mainly been wheat plus pipes for the Basra oil refinery. But the shipping sources predict a steady increase in cement, pipes, steel, and grain followed by consumer goods.

"The Iraqis have a huge pent-up demand for consumer goods after eight years of wartime economy," one shipper said.

The result will be a mini-boom in transhipment until Iraq can get its own ports up and running, the shipping operators said.

Although Iraq mainly uses Aqaba in Jordan and Mersin in Turkey for imports, it has depended on Kuwait for supplies for major construction sites at Basra and Faw in the south and for imports from the Far East.

Bankers say the volume of re-exports from Kuwait will depend on Baghdad's ability to sell oil to raise foreign exchange. In view of Iraq's wartime debt of around \$80 to \$90 million, few banks are willing to extend new credit.

Because of Iraqi delays in repaying its debts, banks have been charging an extraordinary 20 per cent to confirm a letter of credit for imports.

Bankers say Iraqi officials have been promising to have their commercial bank debt — far less than half the total — paid off by 1993, with only letters of credit and government loans left.

Dubai, the port thought most suited to take advantage of Iranian reconstruction, has been less fortunate than Kuwait, with a sharp decline in trading during the last year of the war.

Meanwhile, the Geneva-based Arab-Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Industry said, as latest reforms take effect, the prospects for the revival of the post-war Iraqi economy look good, with most of the country's difficulties expected to be non-structural and short-term.

In its latest publication, the chamber notes that in the long run, Iraq is expected to have no difficulty financing development, given its agricultural and industrial resource base, and its 100,000 million barrels of proven oil reserves, as well as other mineral resources.

This is further supported by its vast human resources. The percentage of qualified administrators, scientists and technocrats in its 17 million-strong population is relatively high

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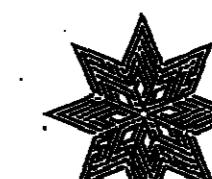
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In search of a new image

The origins of modern financial system in Kuwait

By M.C. Bose

THE origins of the modern financial system in Kuwait can be traced back to the first export of oil in 1946. This had three important effects: it boosted domestic liquidity and increased the need for financial intermediation; it led to a higher level of savings; and it prompted the evolution of enterprises with more complex financial requirements than in the past.

All three trends were manifested in 1952 when NBK, Kuwait's first national bank, was created. Not only was this the first major Kuwait-owned financial intermediary, but its capital requirements were met by Kuwait's first issue of shares, which were also the state's first tradeable financial assets.

NBK joined a branch of the British Bank of the Middle East which had been operating in Kuwait since 1942.

The financial system really started to take shape on independence in 1961. In that year, the Kuwaiti dinar was put into circulation and a Currency Board and four financial institutions were created: Gulf Bank, Commercial Bank, the Credit Bank (reorganised and renamed in 1965 as the Credit and Savings Bank) and the Kuwait Investment Company.

The Kuwait Foreign Trading, Contracting and Investment Company was established in 1965, while Al Ahli Bank was founded in 1967.

An important turning-point occurred in 1968, when the Currency Board was superseded by the Central Bank of Kuwait. This reflected the increasing pace of financial activity, which demanded better regulatory controls over the financial institutions and the money supply.

Thus, by the end of 1960s, the groundwork for the present system was laid. Most of the remaining major financial institutions were created during the 1970s, partly in response to a new influx of liquidity consequent on higher oil prices. Burgan Bank, of course, is Kuwait's youngest commercial bank. It opened its doors in 1977 and has enjoyed

rapid and sound growth since then.

By the start of the 1980s, today's financial framework was in place, with the Central Bank, a formal stock exchange, seven commercial banks, three specialised banks, one Islamic bank, 18 investment companies, 5 national insurance companies and a dozen foreign-owned ones, 80 or 90 money changers.

There have been no major changes since then, although five new investment companies have opened, while a few more have closed. Also, the money changers have been brought under the control of the Central Bank, and at the end of 1987, there were 39 registered.

In 1961, a Currency Board was considered to be adequate to control Kuwait's financial system. The accelerating pace of activity after independence created a need for a body with stronger regulatory powers. Hence, the Central Bank of Kuwait opened its doors on April 1, 1969. It has developed a set of formal regulations through which it influences monetary and economic developments and guard depositors' interests.

In addition to this regulatory role, the Central Bank also issues the Kuwaiti currency and ensures that it remains stable and convertible, and acts as banker to the banks and the government.

Central Bank controls may be divided into two categories. There are open market operations which influence the financial system, and there are rules and guidelines which are applied directly to the financial institutions.

Kuwait's 1961 commercial law provided for a maximum contractual rate of interest. This has given the borrower good protection, while providing a legal framework for the banks. Consequently, Kuwait's financial institutions have never run into problems over the legality of interest which have arisen in some other Islamic states.

From 1961 to 1977, lending rates were subject to a legal ceiling of seven per cent per annum. This created a situation of

where a KD market could well have developed outside of Kuwait, and it also denied the authorities an important tool for monetary control.

Thus, in 1976 a law was passed allowing the Central Bank to set interest rate limits upon approval by the Ministry of Finance.

In February 1977, the ceiling for loans was raised to 10 per cent. For advances to be repaid within one year, there were limits of seven per cent for secured loans for productive activities such as importing or construction and 8.5 per cent for unsecured loans.

Interest rates on foreign currency transactions were unrelated. Also, a new 4.5 per cent minimum was introduced for the rate of interest paid on saving accounts.

The interest rate structure then remained unchanged for 11 years.

In March 1987, the maxima were reduced in the hope of stimulating economic activity. But the upward trend in world rates forced an increase in December 1988, as recently reported on these pages.

One last point on interest is that maximum deposit rates are set by agreement among the banks.

In consequence, the rates are relatively inflexible. This sometimes causes flows out of the dinar when competing rates are higher overseas.

In the 1950s, four joint-stock (public shareholding) companies were established. These were NBK, the Kuwait National Cinema Company, Kuwait National Airways (now KAC), and the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company. Their shares were issued in Indian rupees, then the only currency in Kuwait.

The market took off after independence in 1961 when the government collaborated with private enterprise to create the joint sector of the economy.

Thirteen companies were floated between 1960 and 1962, while by 1970 there were 25 in existence. 'Stagging' produced good profits for some speculators, and share

prices jumped by 40 per cent in 1962 alone.

However, share trading was hampered in the 1960s by the lack of a formal stock exchange and fluctuations in government spending.

But the sharp rise in oil prices in the early 1970s provided new liquidity. Equity prices were bid up by 200 per cent between early 1971 and late 1973.

During the boom, another 11 companies were set up. One important development was the flotation of real estate companies such as importing or construction and 8.5 per cent for unsecured loans.

The imposition of official regulations over share transactions, and high interest rates overseas, prompted a retreat in share prices in 1974. But a construction-based boom in 1975-76 pushed up share prices, first of real estate companies, and then Al Manakh.

Post-dated cheques, prohibited in 1974, reappeared. Fresh government regulations and the maturity of forward deals led to another share price retreat in 1977.

With a ban on new issues in Kuwait, over 40 Gulf companies were established over the next few years. Since these shares could not be traded on the new official exchange, an unregulated parallel market developed.

Trading took place in a commercial building called the Souk Al Manakh. A way from the watchful eye of the authorities, speculation based on forward deals re-emerged — boosted by the repatriation of funds from abroad where interest rates were falling.

Moreover, the practice of floating companies purely for speculation in their shares also resurfaced.

In 1981 and 1982, nearly 100 closed companies appeared, compared with 200 in the 17 years between 1963 and 1980.

It was reported that some premiums reached 400 per cent in 1982. However, when prices eased towards the end of that summer, under the impact of

recession and the Iraq-Iran war, some participants found themselves unable to fulfil their contracts.

The resulting defaults rippled through the market and led to a spectacular collapse in Al Manakh shares.

It is only now, some six years later, that full confidence is returning to the market. A whole series of new government regulations have ensured that today's share trading is much more soundly based.

The Kuwaiti bond market is highly attractive to international borrowers. It can boast surplus capital, low interest rates and a stable exchange rate relationship with the US dollar.

It is to be hoped that the authorities will soon formulate a coherent strategy to enable the country to benefit from the potential.

The KD bond market might be dated from 1968, when KIC arranged KD140 million of private placements for the World Bank. But the true beginning was in 1974, when the jump in Kuwait's capital surplus made it a potent source of funds for international borrowers.

Kuwait's first public bond issue took place in 1974. This was a KD5 million loan for the Republic of the Philippines, with a five year maturity and an eight per cent coupon.

The first domestic issue was in 1975. There was a sharp increase in issuing activity over the next few years, with some major international names tapping the Kuwaiti market.

In a notable development, the Central Bank of Kuwait issued Kuwait's first Treasury bills in November 1987, and the Gulf's first Treasury bonds in the following month.

Both bills and bonds allow the government to borrow some of the private sector's surplus investment funds to help finance the budget deficit.

The maximum amount of Treasury paper which may be outstanding at any one time is stipulated by the public debt limit. This was originally set at KD1.4 billion, but in March



Kuwaiti banks, including Al Ahli, are expanding internationally.

1989 it was raised to KD3 billion for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1989.

Bills held by the commercial banks count towards their reserve requirements. The treasuries provide a tool for regulating the level of liquidity in

the system. By taking more of the paper onto its own book the Central Bank can increase the amount of money in circulation.

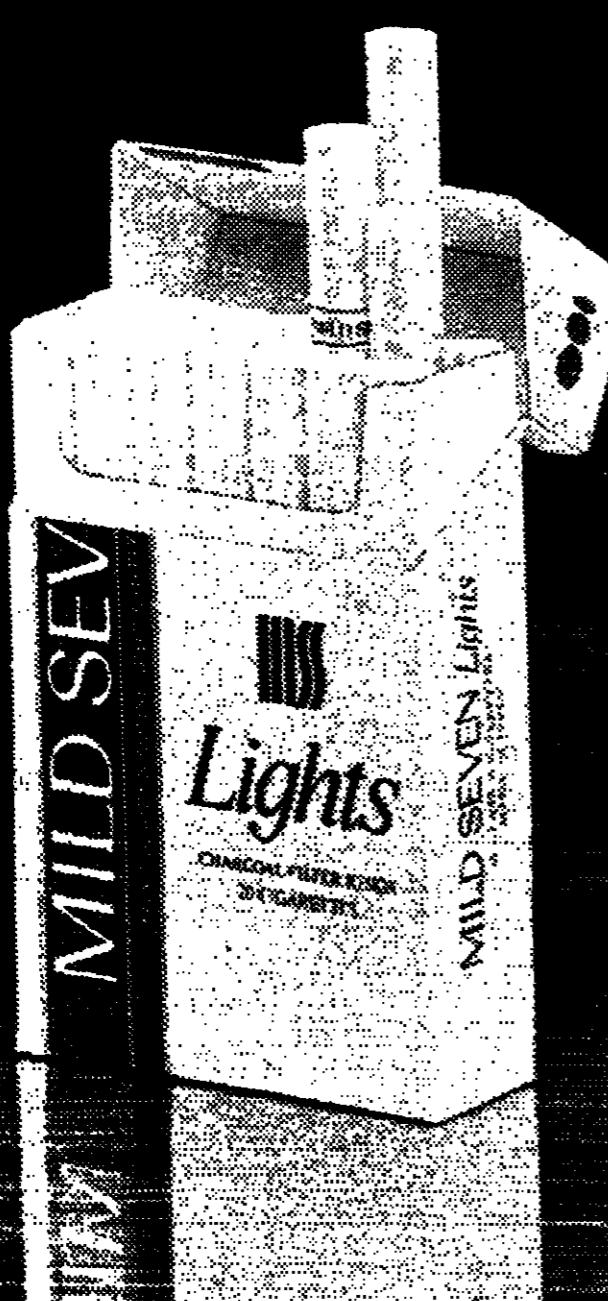
(It buys the paper from the banks and other holders, giving them cash in return.) By selling some of its holdings, the Central Bank

can reduce liquidity.

The bills and bonds are issued regularly by the Central Bank on behalf of the Ministry of Finance. The paper is sold initially to those financial institutions under the Central Bank control.

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Sustained growth forecast for '90s

By M.C. Boss

A WELL-KNOWN Kuwaiti banker has said that there is a general consensus within the business community in Kuwait that 1990 will be a point of inflection in the growth curve of the Kuwaiti economy. There is a deep belief that the 1990s are pregnant with new potentialities for the Kuwaiti economy which deserve such an optimistic spirit.

Saleh M. Al Yousef chairman and managing director of the Industrial Bank of Kuwait said three shocks which were responsible for the recessionary trend and sluggish mode that dominated the Kuwaiti economy in the '80s have either disappeared or are fading away. First, the soft international oil market is now reverting its trend. Even the most conservative scenarios concerning oil price forecasts for the 1990s are quite high compared to the second half of the 1980s. The same applies to Opec quota estimates. These forecasts imply higher oil GDP growth rates, higher government revenue and expenditure and hence higher non-oil GDP growth rates for the 1990s. Secondly, the Iraqi-Iran war is now over and the settlement of the dispute is expected very soon.

The atmosphere of uncertainty it created and its negative externalities on domestic economic life is now fading away.

Moreover, the reconstruction activities in both countries are creating new potentialities for the business sector in Kuwait. Thirdly, the negative effects of the stock market (Al Mansaq) crisis on the domestic economy in general and the banking sector in particular are nearly over thanks to the DDSP introduced by the Central Bank in 1986.

Al Yousef said the policy recommendations of the joint committee report are taking care of the remaining side-effects of the problem. "We hope that the banking sector will regain its vital role as the source of lubricants necessary for the domestic economic machine. Over and above, all the above developments are taking place at a time when the long-term



Saleh M. Al Yousef

strategy for Kuwait development has been formulated which includes the aspirations and the economic path of Kuwait in the future. This strategy has been translated into a long-term development plan for the years 1990-2015 which has been submitted to the Cabinet. The work is being carried out to finalise the 1990-1995 five-year development plan as a component of the long-term plan," he added.

There are signs that business confidence in Kuwait has been reawakened notably in the banking sector and financial markets. When asked whether the chairman is satisfied with the pace at which this process is proceeding he said "Indeed I am satisfied to a great extent. I think that this reawakened confidence in the business sector in general and the banking sector in particular has its roots in two major developments. First, is the new image of growth prospects for the Kuwait economy in the 1990s. The second is the initiative taken by HH the Crown Prince at the end of last year to activate domestic economic activities, improving the quality of assets, looking for new products, discovering new instruments etc. then the bias of the policy direction should be towards those debts that are time consuming and do not impose a real financial burden on the banks."

According to the report, 54.2 percent of the DDSP clients' debts below KD250,000 while their debts represent 2.5 percent of all debts in the programme. Moreover, their share of the banking assets is infinitesimal. The report proposes the settlement of those clients' debts by using mortgage and dropping the uncertain portion of the debt. The debtor would be left the choice to benefit from the settlement during the period determined by the Central Bank so that no one can benefit if the definite period elapses. The rules and regulations to govern those settlements are in the process of formulation and will clear all its negative influences."

be out soon. As to those programme clients whose debts exceed KD250,000, the report opens for them the option of immediate settlement in accordance with regulations to be set by the Central Bank.

In reply to a question whether this will lift a burden from about 50 per cent of individuals in the difficult credit facilities settlement programme and allow them to focus more clearly on current business opportunities the chairman said those 54 per cent of the debtors who finalised their settlements according to the proposals of the commission's report will no longer be under the umbrella of the programme and will be now free to direct all their time to develop their current business and will be able to apply for credit facilities from the banks if their business potentialities allows them to do so.

Moreover, the report allows debtors who documented their settlements to trade in their assets mortgaged with the banks in accordance with rules to be set by the CBK.

When asked about this move whether it is part of a blueprint for overhauling the country's economy and includes activation of the relatively dormant stock market and encouragement of the private sector and its role, Al Yousef said the report is comprehensive.

The fact that an important weight was given to the improving of the DDSP and the banking sector does not minimise the weight given to other sectors. As I mentioned earlier the banking sector is the lubricating machine for domestic economic activities. However, the report includes policy measures recommended to be carried out at the sectoral level to activate economic life in industry, real estate, construction, trade...etc. The aim of the policy is to replace the mode of uncertainty by a new mode of confidence to encourage the private sector, which has shied away from productive investment in last few years, to regain its vital role in the economy.

The regaining of confidence by private business and the activation of the domestic economy are necessary conditions for awakening the relatively dormant stock market. Give me a flourishing economy and successful production units according to normal financial indicators and I can give you in exchange a booming stock market," the chairman said.

omy are necessary conditions for awakening the relatively dormant stock market. Give me a flourishing economy and successful production units according to normal financial indicators and I can give you in exchange a booming stock market," the chairman said.

When his attention was drawn to a report that some of the local banks and financial institutions were planning to merge or integrate in order to strengthen their competitive edge and cost cutting drive, Al Yousef said: "I think it is no secret now. It has been mentioned by the Governor of the Central Bank on several occasions. Merging would be justified on several grounds. It is justified in view of the size of the domestic market and the state of local banks. It is justified on the ground that we are planning for Kuwait to be a regional financial market. It is justified if we want our banks to be competitive in the international financial markets of the '90s. The '90s will witness the completion of the process of integration and globalisation of international financial markets. The '90s will be the era of giant organisations and severe competition.

He said merging is a rational process in certain circumstances. It would rationalise the use of fixed assets and a lot of savings would be achieved in this respect. Moreover, a great deal of rationalisation would be achieved also in the wage bill. Huge economies of scale are expected in such a merging process. That some of the labour force might be redundant is correct. However, this is the price of efficiency. Moreover, such redundancy would never pose a problem if we are talking about a booming economy. They will soon be absorbed in other sectors.

In a reply to a question if the integration process is proved to be real, the government should intensify its foreign operations through these banks on commercial basis, the IBK chairman said there are several ways through which the government can help the local banks. One of them is to carry out some of their foreign operations through local banks.

DR Abdul Aziz Sultan, chairman and delegate member of the Gulf Bank has said a positive aspect of the economic report is reflected in the recommendation which allows debtors to manage their assets. While governed by CBK regulations, such recommendations provide the debtors with a reprieve for improving their asset value.

Dr Sultan said there is no doubt that the recommendation of joint economic committee if implemented will lead to some improvement. But such measures alone are not sufficient to lead to the economic growth we aspire for. We need other measures:

- Diversification of Kuwait's economic base away from oil.
- Improving public sector management.
- Creation of more competitive economy (less restriction to formation of companies).
- Open and freer society.
- Better management of the economy.
- Better management of Kuwait's resources.
- An effective Human Resource Development.
- Improving private/public sector, currently unhealthy relations, etc ...

The chairman said the content of the economic report as regards the banks' difficult debts would, no doubt, ease some of the banks' burden. Some 681 debtors, comprising 54.2 per cent of total debtors with liabilities constituting 2.5 per cent of total debt have so

Economic base to be diversified

Banker sets priorities

By M.C. Boss



Dr Abdul Aziz Sultan

posed an administrative burden on the banks. Writing off those debts will allow the banks to restructure their non-performing loan portfolios and concentrate their efforts on redressing the situation of the bad debtors.

- Restructuring of the banks' overall growth prospects, the Gulf Bank's chairman said the outlook for an improved world oil market and a recovery in oil prices in the 1990s, and subsequently increased oil revenues for the Arab oil producing countries, provides good reason for better business for GCC banks in the years ahead. To be noted, here, is the prospect of the opening of a new market, the Eastern Europe market, for Arab oil exports.

About the bank's expansion drive the chairman said, "our plans currently focus on improving the quality of our services, which we are trying to effect by upgrading the quality of our employees and their performance. Our expansion strategy shall be identified as soon as our strategy's objectives and plan are completed."

Kuwait insurance market

New boom area predicted

THE Arab Times contacted C.S.S. Khanpuri, Chairman of the Kuwait Insurance Association (and the Agency General Manager of Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance Plc), about his views on the current situation of the Kuwait insurance market and about the activities of the Kuwait Insurance Association.

Khanpuri said that there has been a slight improvement in the market after the cessation of hostilities between Iran and Iraq. However, the degree of improvement is nowhere near the expectations which we had for a long time. The marine premium-income of the market has been continuously going down.

In 1980, the total marine premiums of the Kuwait market were about KD18 million, and in 1984 the same were more than KD25 million. This figure has now come down to less than KD15 million. The total market premiums for all classes of general insurance business (i.e. excluding Life business) were more than KD75 million in 1984 for the whole market, whereas they are now less than KD55 million.

This is a very big drop of revenue for the insurance companies. It is out of this premium-income that the insurance companies have to pay losses and meet claims arising from fire, motor, marine, theft and workers' compensation insurances etc. The loss experience of marine has been

ing the claims, i.e. salaries of the insurance staff, office expenses, and commissions and brokerage etc. The insurance companies hope that the market will improve in volume and rating and they will be able to maintain the present level of good staff and service. The insurance companies are normally happy with small margins of underwriting profits, i.e. profit purely from insurance business.

As regards Kuwait Insurance Association, Khanpuri said that it was formed in 1959. At that time there were more than 30 foreign insurance companies operating in Kuwait and all were members of the association. This association did a lot of technical work and provided useful guidance to the companies and created a sound insurance market in Kuwait. At that time there were no Kuwaiti companies in the country.

When the Kuwaiti companies were formed later, they decided not to join the association but did co-operate with the Kuwait Insurance Association in various matters whenever there were common problems affecting all the insurance companies and whenever there was a need for a joint action, like recovering goods from ships which became bankrupt, or which discharged their cargoes at some ports on their way to Kuwait.

Similarly, there have been many (Continued on Page 18)

Money keeps flowing, says Kuwait Fund

DURING 1988/1989, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development continued its efforts in extending concessionary loans to a number of developing countries to help them in the financing of their high priority projects. Such loans are extended after review of the feasibility studies and appraisal of the projects and conclusion of loan agreements.

The fund has also maintained the usual follow-up of the implementation of on-going projects and provision of advice

and consultation to recipient countries to help them in the realisation of their developmental objectives and the benefits of the projects in the financing of which the Fund participates. The Fund also continued to follow up technical assistance grants provided to support and strengthen the development efforts of recipient countries and institutions and to help them in the development of their human resources and also to enable them to improve technical and administrative capabilities as well as performance.

During the fiscal year under review, the Fund extended 19 loans with a total value of KD84 million to assist in financing development projects in the agricultural, transport and communications, industry, electricity, water and sewage sectors. The recipient countries included six Arab countries, eight African countries and three Asian countries, in addition to one other country. The share of the Arab countries in the total loan commitments during 1988/1989 was

49.2 per cent — African countries 29.4 per cent, Asian countries 18.5 per cent and other countries 2.9 per cent.

As to the sectoral distribution of these loans, the agricultural sector and its primary sub-sectors ranked first with a share of 31.2 per cent in the total value of loans committed during the year. It was followed by transport and communication sector 27 per cent, industries 21.4 per cent, water and sewage 18 per cent, African countries 28.7 per cent and other countries 1.7 per cent.

With the closing of the current fiscal year the total number of loans, extended by the Fund, stood at 360 loans with a total value of KD1.584 million benefiting 65 developing countries including 16 Arab countries, 30 African countries, 15 Asian countries and four other countries. The share of the Arab countries in the total value of loans extended by the Fund up to 30/6/1989 stood at 50.9 per cent, African countries 18.7 per cent, Asian countries 28.7 per cent and other countries 1.7 per cent.

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Link with Kuwait dates back to 30 years

Air India gears up for '90s

OCTOBER 4, 1960 was Air India Day in Kuwait. An Air India Super constellation, "Rani of Ind," commanded by Capt R.K. Scrawall took off from Santa Cruz Airport at 10 am on October 4, on its inaugural flight to Kuwait via Bahrain forging yet another link with the neighbouring countries in West Asia.

Air India operated its first weekly service between Bombay and Kuwait via Karachi and Bahrain, carrying on board fare paying passengers and 18 guests from India.

To commemorate the inauguration of Air India's new service, S.K. Kooka, Commercial Director, presented on behalf of the chairman of India, a silver coffee set to Sheikh Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Amir of Bahrain and a silver tea set to HH Sheikh Abdulla Al Salem Al Sabah, who was then the Amir of



P.R. Kangal,
AI manager - Kuwait.

Kuwait.
Dr S. Radhakrishnan, the vice-president of India, in a message of greetings to the Amir of Kuwait said:

"Your Highness,

May I greet your Highness and the people of Kuwait on the occasion of the inaugural flight of the Air India International plane to your country. I have no doubt that these flights will foster friendship between our two peoples besides stimulating trade. With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

S. Radhakrishnan.

The commercial director conveyed the letter of greetings to HH Sheikh Abdulla Al Salem Al Sabah.

The inaugural flight touched down at Kuwait Airport at 5:30 pm (local time) on October 4.

New India insurance operation abroad

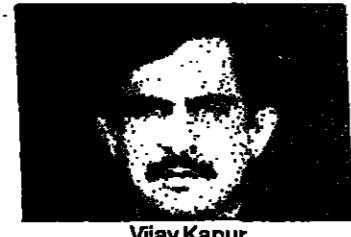
A dream turns into reality

By Vijay Kapur, resident manager. "NEW INDIA" is unique in the sense that it is the only Indian Insurance company which operates in as many as 22 countries. It is internationally known not only for being the leading company in India (premium income in 1989 about KD125 million) but also as an active foreign insurer abroad. It is the only Indian company authorized to operate in the UK and recognized by the British Board of Trade.

When the company was established in July, 1919 it entered into an agency agreement with the largest English broker "Sedwicks" and this agreement still operates. Similarly we had entered into an agreement with the largest insurance company in UK "Commercial Union" and this also continues.

In 1921 New India was recognized as a member of the International London Underwriters authorized to transit Marine Insurance in the London market. In 1922 New India started doing business in China, Malaysia and Singapore. We had an agency of the largest Japanese company "Tokyo Marine" in Japan as early as 1927.

New India's foreign operations expanded considerably in the 1950s and 1960s. We have extended help to the Third World countries to build up their insurance industry either by



Vijay Kapur

lending our manpower or by training their officers in India. In London our branch is a fine example of Indo-British joint venture in UK where three top companies, Commercial Union, Lagan and General and Orient are our partners in different fields of insurance.

In Japan we have 13 offices, mostly manned by Japanese and proud of their links with New India. They actively compete with Japanese companies and sell New India policies to the Japanese. By the end of 1980, New India was operating in over 60 countries in the form of branches and agencies but because of nationalisation or state restrictions the number of overseas units of New India got reduced. It still ranks within the first five among international insurance companies in terms of territorial spread of operations. It could, therefore, be concluded that the dream of its founder member to

establish "New India" as a truly international company has been fulfilled.

"New India" started operation in Kuwait in December, 1953 through Mohamed Saleh Behbehani as a partner. The company was reconstituted into a limited company in August, 1986 in order to introduce Mohamed Reza Behbehani younger brother of Mohamed Saleh Behbehani and J.T. Monteiro, elder son of the late S.B. Monteiro. Our agents Mohamed Saleh and Mohamed Reza Yousef Behbehani are reputed and old residents of Kuwait.

Their main interests are trading i.e. dealership of American/Japanese cars, garage owners and owners of Seven-Up Bottling Company. New India's relations with our agents have been very good since the inception of the agency operations. The agency has been very well managed by C.M. Thomas, Deputy General Manager over the years. As a result of strict administrative controls and co-operation of our agents our performance in Kuwait has been profitable.

From 1986 we have undertaken ourselves to be more aggressive in the market and have been able to increase our business by nearly 100 per cent over these years.

Today "New India" is a company with KD125 million premium, paid

up capital KD4.8 million, assets and investments KD245.5 million, reserves and underwriting funds KD117.9 million. Our Head Office at the "New India Building" Brinley is a massive structure showing its financial strength and enshrined its consistent commitment to the paramount objective of the national movement to secure the socio-economic welfare of the country. The company has a genuine concern for each and every customer shared by 4,000 officers and over 16,000 strong New India family, internationally.

"New India's" future plans reflect its commitment to growth in India and abroad through providing service to all sections of the population. It is already gearing up for its rightful place in the 21st century and is confident of scaling greater heights through its emphasis on excellence. The company's philosophy can be stated as to establish a world-wide presence, to maintain highest standards of skill and to uphold and strengthen its reputation as a truly global company. The company has under active consideration several proposals for expansion of its network abroad. The proposals for revival and/or expansion of our operation in Canada, Belgium, France, Portugal, Holland, Spain, Botswana, Cameroon, Zimbabwe are already underway.

The company has a network of 850 regional, divisional and branch offices in India and abroad.

The total gross premium underwritten by the company in 1988-89 was over KD64 million. The company has a trained manpower of over 15,000 officers and staff.

Kohli said the operations of Kuwait branch are managed through the agents M/s Bader Al Mulla & Bros Co. W.L.L. from a most modern office in Mubarak Al Kabir Street through the most experienced and efficient staff. This office underwrites a gross premium income of approximately KD1.8 million, and has a highly trained staff.

Presently the operations of the company are looked after by its Resident Manager, Kohli, a Fellow of Insurance Institute and as Associate Member of Institute of Company Secretaries, London. He has been with the company for the past 28 years including being in the sophisticated insurance market of Singapore for 5 years. The company will shortly computerise its operations in Kuwait including the issuance of policies in motor and marine classes.

New boom area predicted

(Continued from Page 17)

other areas of friendly co-operation between the Kuwait Insurance Association and the Kuwaiti companies which are much larger in size than branches of foreign companies in Kuwait.

At present there are 12 foreign

insurance companies operating in Kuwait, doing general non-life insurance business, and all are members of the Kuwait Insurance Association. Out of 12 foreign insurance companies, four are Lebanese, 3 are English, 2 are Indian, 1 Egyptian, 1 Jordanian, and 1 Japanese. The Kuwait Insurance

Association has been doing great service to the business community in Kuwait for the last 30 years without any break in the technical and professional field and it is hoped that more years to come and will continue to offer its co-operation to the large national companies.

**BEWARE
OF
IMITATIONS**

Dear Consumers
When you buy a packet of tea or tea bags please check following identification marks:

**LOOK
FOR
THIS
SYMBOL**

1 →

INDIA TEA

2 → Name & address of Indian exporter

**For pure & genuine India
The World's No. 1**

*For further information:
Director of Tea Promotion
Tea Board of India
C/o Embassy of India*

*P.O. Box 1450
Safat 13004, Kuwait
Phone: 2419420 Telex: 44653 DTPKWT*

Together Towards Tomorrow



Looking back, it was in 1960 when Air-India started operations to Kuwait.

And in 1961, the state of Kuwait was celebrating the joy of independence.

Over the years, Air-India has been closely associated with this nation, and its friendly skies.

Today, Air-India joins in the celebrations of the National Day, and extends its best wishes to the Government and People of Kuwait.

AIR-INDIA



**New India policies
don't cost a fortune.**

Not taking them could.

New India Assurance

giant network of over 1000 offices in India and abroad.

To retain leadership, New India offers something special with every cover ...

The personal touch ...

A genuine concern for each and every customer shared by 4000 officers and the over 16,000 strong New India family, Internationally.

You name the risk. We insure it.



**NEW INDIA
ASSURANCE**

Principal Agent: Mohamed Saleh Behbehani

P.O. Box No. 370 - 13004 Safat Kuwait.
Tel.: 2433056, 2416477, 2412085 Telex: 22194 SHIPPING KUWAIT.
SO MUCH SECURITY FOR SO LITTLE.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Arabs invested \$150b abroad

A LEADING Kuwaiti economist and former minister of finance has said that Arab Gulf governments must draw plans for attracting substantial financial resources belonging to the private sector but deposited outside the region.

Abdellatif Al Hamad, board chairman and general manager of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, contended that about \$150 billion was invested outside member states of the Gulf Co-operation Council.

Al Hamad's remarks were made during a lecture he presented recently on future obstacles facing the GCC in various aspects of the economy and finance.

"These assets must be attracted to the region under a carefully drawn plan to reactivate the economic situation in the area," Hamad emphasised.

He pointed out that GCC countries are working smoothly toward specialisation and turning publicly owned corporations to the private sector.

He drew a bright picture for the coming years for oil producing states, saying that oil prices will climb again to the \$30 a barrel ceiling under a growing demand for Opec oil and declined production from Non-Opec sources.

On population growth, he stressed that by the year 2000 the GCC states would have a total of 31 million people at the average growth rate of 3.84 percent (mostly living in Saudi Arabia (7.7 per cent) and Kuwait (9.6 per cent)).

In another development in a major boost to the country's private sector, Kuwait is planning to build a polypropylene plant with private capital participation.

It is expected that the Kuwait Petrochemical Industries Company (KPIC) will invite international companies to bid for the proposed project, which is estimated to cost about \$100 million.

Technical experts were preparing the final legal text of the tender, which would involve design, construction, operation and maintenance of the plant.

Seminar on overseas investment in Poland

ONE of the most important events, which will take place during "Polish Trade Week", March 4-9, 1990, International Fair Ground—Miseric, Hall No.2, is seminar "Foreign Investments in Poland — New regulations and prospects."

The seminar is organised by Kuwait Foreign Trading Contracting and Investment Co. with co-operation of Kuwait Investment Authority and Commercial Office of Polish Embassy under the patronage of Witold Jurasz, ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Kuwait.

The main purpose of this seminar is to familiarise business men from Kuwait and other Gulf countries with the legal and financial aspects of creating and operating joint ventures in Poland, direct investments and purchasing real estate in Poland by foreign parties.

Special presentation will be made by representatives of Polish authorities on Polish economy and the incentives available to foreign investors. The programme of seminar covers the following main lectures:

"Foreign Investments in Poland" — presented by Dr Zbigniew Pietrowski, president of Foreign Investment Agency, Warsaw.

G-7 likely to meet in Europe

PARIS, Feb 23, (Reuter): French Finance Minister Pierre Beregovoy said yesterday the Group of Seven industrial nations could hold its regular spring meeting in Europe.

Beregovoy said the G-7 is due to meet in May before the interim committee of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) gathers in Washington.

"It's quite possible that there'll be a meeting in Europe," he told his regular weekly news conference. He declined to elaborate and told reporters: "Don't make me say too much."

International financial markets have been turbulent in recent weeks, in part on speculation the G-7 leaders might meet shortly to review interest rates and currency policy.

World Bank vows \$5b for East Europe

WARSAW, Feb 23, (UPI): The World Bank yesterday launched a \$5 billion three-year lending programme to support economic reforms in Eastern Europe by signing two agreements on credits totaling \$360 million to boost Polish exports.

The loan package was signed by World Bank president Barber Conable and Finance Minister Leszek Balcerowicz at a ceremony attended by Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and ambassadors of other East European countries.

"We are in Poland not to provide short-term relief but long-term growth — to ensure that Poland's available

resources are co-ordinated in ways that are efficient and useful for the Polish people," Conable said.

One loan, for \$260 million, will help develop exports of industrial products. The second, for \$100 million, is to boost the export potential of the agricultural and food sector. Both will be for repayable in 17 years with a five-year grace period.

Conable said the nations of Western Europe can expect to receive loans worth more than \$5 billion in the next three years as they readjust their economies — half off for Poland to assist its "courageous" efforts.

"If Eastern Europe shows strong

spirit and determination in implementing reforms, it can count on support and concrete assistance of World Bank and IMF (International Monetary Fund), he said.

Under Mazowiecki's Solidarity government, Poland began implementing on Jan 1 a tough economic programmes that will move it from an inefficient, centrally planned economy toward one based more on competition and private enterprise.

The changeover, the most drastic ever attempted in a Soviet bloc country, is expected to lead to unemployment and worker dislocations while Poland's industrial base adjusts to the new

demands. Hungary is preparing to implement a similar programme.

Conable said the bank will open a resident mission in Warsaw within three months and strengthen its East European programme of policy advice, technical work, research and training.

Conable said the bank has adequate resources to support the Polish programme without diminishing support elsewhere, but stressed the World Bank cannot supply all necessary support and encouraged Poland to cooperate closely with the 17-nation Paris Club of Western creditors.

Talks are scheduled later this year with the World Bank on loans for nine

more programmes. A \$150 million credit to modernize transportation is due to be initiated later this month and another one to increase energy supplies, worth \$250 million, is to be concluded in March.

A \$100 million programme to develop Poland's poor telecommunications facilities is scheduled to be initiated in June.

The first six enterprises to benefit from the loans include a petrochemical plant in Plock north of Warsaw, a fertilizer manufacturing giant in Pulawy south-east of Warsaw and a furniture plant in Zielona Gora in western Poland.

The landmark agreements were signed at the start of a two-day visit by Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger to Warsaw.

Eagleburger, President Bush's Eastern Europe representative, met with Deputy Treasury Secretary John Robinson and a group of advisors to learn how Poland intends to use American investment credits.

Poland hopes the United States will support decisions that would reduce its staggering \$41 billion international debt burden.

Today, Poland signed a major agreement with the Paris Club to reschedule \$10.2 billion of external debt.

Loan agreement signed

World oil prices slide

Talks vital to avert global price shock

LONDON, Feb 23, (Reuters): Opec's secretary-general called yesterday for urgent talks on averting the risk of a new global oil price shock.

The official, Subroto of Indonesia, said he favoured discussions bringing together consumer governments, the banks, oil multinationals and Opec itself as soon as possible.

"There is no room for confrontation," he said in a speech to the Institute of Petroleum, an industry forum.

He said an agreed strategy was imperative to create a climate in which oil producing nations, companies and banks could commit the vast sums needed if a surprisingly strong surge in world demand is to be met.

Subroto repeated his assessment that the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries must invest \$60 billion before 1995 to boost the output capacity of their oil fields — "a challenge too great for Opec countries to meet on their own."

An ageing, accident-prone global refinery system and tanker fleet must be expanded and modernised. Installations should

also be upgraded to meet tighter anti-pollution rules against lead and sulphur.

"The margin of safety is already rather small," Subroto said. "Any disruption in supply or demand could cause a shock in the system."

"That is why it is almost mandatory that the discussions to which I have referred should be held as soon as possible," he said.

"Refineries everywhere are ageing and accidents are increasing. In the last 18 months there has been an unprecedented series of mishaps, reflecting wear and tear on plant and equipment built in the late 1960s."

"Society will also expect the industry to take into account the environment in everything it does."

Industry executives agree that major investment throughout the sector is necessary. "They are daunting totals," said Sir Peter Winters, chairman of British Petroleum (BP).

Some analysts talk in terms of \$1 trillion, partly to make up for spending shelved during the oil glut of the mid-1980s.

Subroto also urged Western

governments not to levy taxes or subsidise other fuels to try to minimise dependence on Opec oil.

"Consumers need security of supply," he said. But for Opec "predictability of demand is vital... if we go in to these huge investments, we do not expect to see consumer policies designed to apply downward pressure on the demand for Opec oil."

He also said gradually rising oil prices were an essential incentive to large-scale investment. Opec felt the best solution would be to raise its current reference price of \$18 per barrel in line with inflation.

"Prices should be allowed to follow a smooth, progressive path over time, thus retaining the incentive factor and at the same time encouraging oil companies to invest in the expansion operations taking place in that region where the bulk of the world's oil reserves are located," Subroto said.

The Opec official also called, for Third World debt relief and a more rapid transfer of technology to developing nations.

World crude oil prices are slid-

ing because of excess Opec supply and warmer weather in the northern hemisphere after an icy snap in the United States at the start of the year.

Prices of "wet barrels" — cargoes with agreed loading dates — of North Sea Brent blend crude oil, a world pricing benchmark, have fallen around \$1.20 per barrel this week.

Brent for March loading is now around \$18.75, compared with \$20 a week ago.

Warm weather has undermined demand for gas oil, a refined product used for domestic, office and commercial heating.

This has in turn encouraged refiners in Europe to go early into the usual spring maintenance shutdowns, ahead of the summer holiday peak season for petrol demand, and this has reduced demand for crude oil.

Adequate oil company stocks and plentiful supplies of crude from the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries have also put pressure on crude prices.

The volume of trading has not, however, been large.

UK team winds up visit

Move to step up investment

NICOSIA, Feb 23, (Reuters): British industrialists have visited Saudi Arabia to discuss boosting investment there to help offset arms deals costing Riyadh an estimated \$20 billion (\$34 billion).

A British embassy official said the businessmen, some representing defence-related companies, ended a week-long visit yesterday after visiting Riyadh, Jeddah, Abha and the industrial city of Jubail.

"There have been lots of discussions on the various aspects of investment in Saudi Arabia but they weren't defence orientated," the official told Reuters by telephone. He gave no details.

Companies represented included General Electric Co., Pte. Northern Engineering Plc which is a unit of Rolls-Royce Plc, GKN Plc, Pilkington Plc and Imperial Chemical Industries Plc.

A senior Saudi Arabian official said the delegation met the Saudi Foreign Affairs Minister Abdulaziz Al-Zamel, Finance and National Economy Minister Sheikh Mohammed Ali

Abd Khalil and Commerce Minister Suleiman Abdulaziz Al-Salim as well as businessmen.

Referring to Western media reports that arms-related industrial schemes were discussed, the official said the British team did not hold talks with the Defence Ministry.

The visit was part of a programme begun by London in 1988 to encourage British companies to invest in industrial and commercial projects in Saudi Arabia, offsetting its purchase of British Tornado fighters, jet trainers, helicopters, minichoppers and other military equipment.

Industry sources have estimated British investment could reach \$1.7 billion under the programme.

Defence analysts say the arms deals, which include construction of bases and support services, could be worth up to \$20 billion.

Saudi Arabia, the Middle East's biggest defence spender, denied in December press reports that it was facing difficulties in meeting payments on the deals.

Dollar firm, gold dives

Shares resume downward

LONDON, Feb 23, (Reuters): Shares resumed the week's downward trend in Europe today as falling Japanese stocks, fears of global interest rate rises and weak bond prices all took their toll on investors' confidence, dealers said.

The dollar closed higher despite the fact central banks sold dollars to support a falling Japanese yen. Dealers said the dollar's gains were due more to weakness in the yen and West German mark rather than inherent dollar strength.

London shares plunged to the lowest levels so far this year but found some support from scattered buying by institutions and from US stocks posting only modest losses. Business was thin and tentative, traders said.

"Until there is some stability overseas the UK market is not going to establish its own trend," a London trader said.

The Financial Times-Stock Exchange index touched a 1990 low of 2,228.3 during trading but closed 32.6 down at 2,236.6.

West German share prices fell sharply, breaking away from a week when they had tracked the bond market. Bonds, on the other hand, firmed slightly.

The Dax index of 30 leading shares fell 30.51 points or 1.7 per cent to 1,789.64. Dealers said trading volume was thin.

The dollar closed in London a pfennig and a yen higher at 1,678 marks and 147.90 yen.

"Its underlying trend at the moment is upwards because of the uncertainty elsewhere," said Carlo Galazzi, chief forward trader at Nikko Bank in London. "But that could quickly change if we get some fresh news to trade off."

The Bank of England and the US Federal Reserve both sold dollars to buy yen when the yen slumped to 146.90 to the dollar, following dollar sales overnight by the Bank of Japan.

The market believes a rise in Japanese interest rates is inevitable and this has knocked Japanese bonds down sharply and made equity traders nervous. The Bank of Japan says it still monitoring the effects of previous rate increases.

Concern that the United States may impose trade sanctions against Japan is also worrying traders.

The German mark is depressed by worries about potentially massive costs involved in West Germany's rescuing the East German economy with plans for monetary union.

Gold closed in London at \$416.20 an ounce, down \$1.55 on Thursday's finish.

Kuwait, Cairo ties lauded

Change sweeping Europe a lesson for Arab world: Egypt

CAIRO, Feb 23, (Reuters): Political and economic changes sweeping Europe showed the Arab world that political progress could only come through economic integration. Egypt's Prime Minister Atif Sedki told Arab finance ministers yesterday.

"We must realise that if economic integration between Arab states does not take place, I doubt very much that progress on political issues can be achieved," Sedki said.

He was addressing ministers and delegates from 22 Arab League members who gathered in Cairo for the day to dis-

cuss the effects of the recent political upheaval in Eastern Europe and the emergence in 1990 of an integrated European Economic Community market.

"What will the Arab nation's position be? Will it benefit from the changes? I doubt it. Will it be harmed? Most probably," Sedki said in what analysts called one of his frankest speeches.

The ministers met at Cairo's Nile-side Arab League building for the first time in more than a decade. The League moved its headquarters to Tunis to protest at Egypt's 1979 peace treaty with Israel.

Sedki said it was unfortunate that trade

between Arab states in 1987 reached only \$6.6 billion compared with \$9.6 billion with the rest of the world.

"We should question, is this the state in which Arab economic integration will be based?" Sedki asked.

"If Arab economic integration was a necessity in the past, today it is a challenge in the light of international changes... and all studies show it is possible."

He urged further contact and economic co-operation between Arab states, increasing the Arab world's industrial and agricultural production and upgrading the Arab workforce.

Arab League secretary-general Chadi Klibi, in a speech read by his assistant Asaad Al Asaad, said Arabs had to review their strategies and economic policies as the world was on the threshold of new political and social structures.

Kuwait's Finance Minister Jassim Mohamed Al Khorafi told reporters that although Arabs ... wish for an Arab common market, they had to realise that it was not yet possible.

"Frankly, our regional gatherings have not yet been able to co-ordinate between each other," Khorafi said.

Kuwait's trade with GCC countries

The pace quickens

KUWAIT'S imports from the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states last January were estimated at KD18,219 million while exports to the GCC countries were 6,895 millions, according to figures released in Kuwait recently.

</div

LEISURE

BLONDIE — By Dean Young & Stan Drake



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE — By Chic Brownie



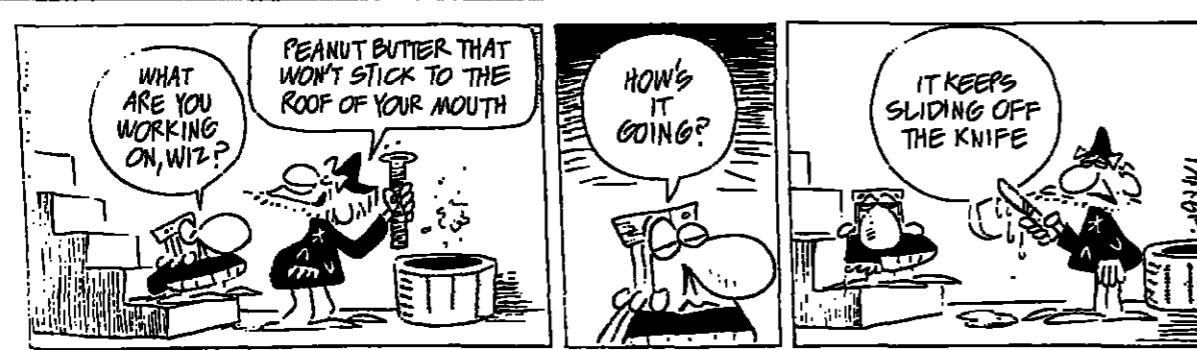
AGATHA CRUMM — By Bill Hoest



BEETLE BAILEY — By Mort Walker



THE WIZARD OF ID — By Brant Parker & Johnny Hart

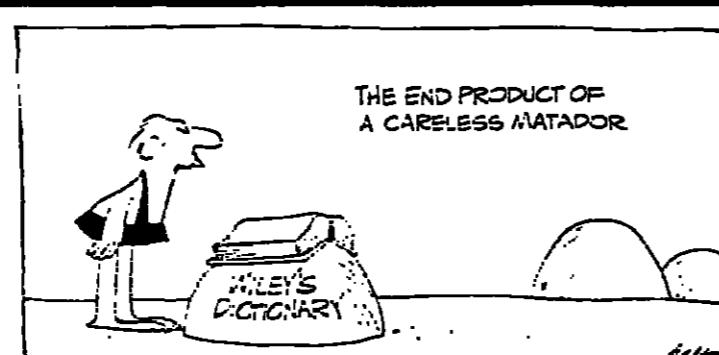


ANDY CAPP



B.C. — By Johnny Hart

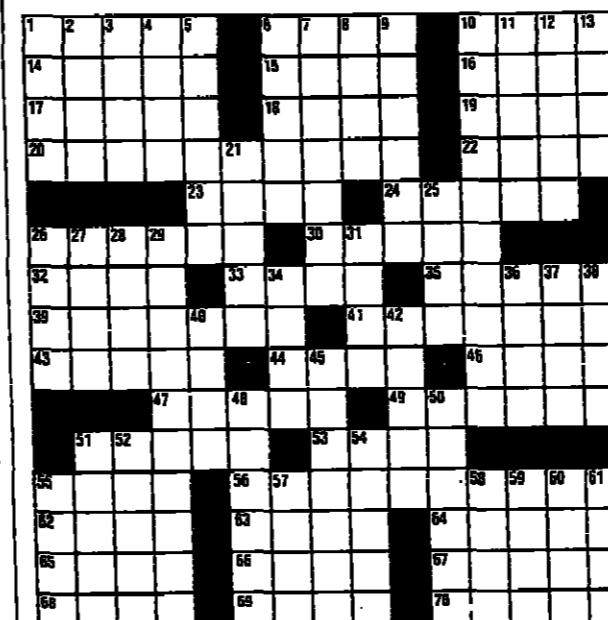
door mat



HE-MAN — By G. Forton & J. Shull



TODAY'S CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Chicago airport
- 6 Develop
- 10 Party, the golfer
- 14 Actress Erin
- 15 Incarnation of Vishnu
- 16 Susane
- 17 Stop, nautically
- 18 Ancient lyre
- 19 Tops
- 20 Mr. Fixit's
- 22 Second word of a fairy tale
- 23 Small hill
- 24 Devoured
- 26 Weakened
- 30 Singer from Melbourne
- 32 — bargain
- 33 Exploit
- 35 — Park, Colo.
- 39 Accumulated
- 41 "He was not born": Shak.
- 43 Fight
- 44 Restaurant critic Greene
- 45 Pass by
- 47 Travels by bus
- 49 Motivates
- 51 Fashion writer's concern
- 53 Spelunker's milieu
- 55 Pith's bull
- 56 Clap joint?
- 62 Accompanied by
- 63 Sutherland solo
- 64 Historic city on the Nile
- 65 Reverberate
- 66 Flaps
- 67 Actress Burstyn
- 68 "Asleep in the —"
- 69 "Waiting for the Robert —"
- 70 Dingles

DOWN

- 1 Khayyam
- 2 Throw with force
- 3 "I don't give —"
- 4 Tabula —
- 5 Having nothing left out
- 6 Lawn
- 7 Bacon units
- 8 Melville novel
- 9 Distorted
- 10 Place of transformation
- 11 One way to marry
- 12 Continued without pause
- 13 Feds
- 21 Range of hills
- 25 Hoosier humorist George and family
- 26 Restorative resorts
- 27 Egyptian dancing girl
- 28 — moss
- 29 Napoleon's place?
- 31 Major ending
- 34 Gambling chance
- 36 Domesticate
- 37 Actor Jennings
- 38 Puts down at bridge
- 40 Smudge
- 42 Shade of green
- 45 Attribute
- 48 Political argument
- 50 Site of Castle AFB
- 51 Flavor enhancer
- 52 A church tax
- 55 Overcome by veneration
- 57 Inland sea
- 58 Store event
- 59 Capitol —
- 60 City on the Oka
- 61 Lily, the diva

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

OATS	SLOE	ALAMO
MERE	CELI	PATER
ARID	RIGA	ATONE
ROMULUS	ANDREMUS	
LAB	EITE	
ASTOR	EIBB	NAPA
CLOUD	KRAUT	NEG
HANSEL	AND GRETEL	
EKG	RINSE	ATALE
SEAL	NET	CHEST
OLD	WEE	
OZZIE	AND HARRIET	
ROUTE	ORAN	ESTE
LOINER	VALE	ALTA
EMIRS	AGES	LEEK

YOUR STARS

Aries
March 21 - April 19

You are likely to make a mistake in your calculations and you should therefore check them carefully. Something you had been planning to do will not work out according to plan. Never mind, it will turn out to have been for the better.

Taurus
April 21 - May 20

You will be annoyed by some petty setback and should instead try to take it in your stride. Your digestion will trouble you, and you should stick to more conventional foods. Do your best to stay on good terms with your colleagues. Be respectable.

Gemini
May 21 - June 20

You are more prone to infection and should take some elementary precautions. There is a greater risk of burglary so do not leave any doors or windows unlocked. Others will not behave just as you would wish them to. Be observant.

Virgo
Aug 22 - Sept 22

Everything is taking just that much longer so do not linger or otherwise waste time. Ensure that you are not late for an appointment. Your lucky numbers are 20 and 37. Do not expect others to do for you what you know you should really do for yourself. Be loyal.

Sagittarius
Sept 23 - Oct 22

There is a better way of dealing with a routine matter only you must be prepared to learn a few new things. You should have a little more faith in yourself. Do not allow work to encroach upon your private life. Be tactful.

Scorpio
Oct 23 - Nov 22

There will be able to make good progress at work, but only if you work really hard without allowing yourself to be distracted. A good idea will help you to deal with an unusual problem. Be sincere.

Capricorn
Dec 21 - Jan 19

You will tend to be forgetful, so do not rely too much on your memory. Do not trust to luck nor just hope that something that could well happen will not. Instead try to leave as little as possible to chance. Be truthful.

Aquarius
Jan 20 - Feb 18

You should not be so fond of the sound of your own voice, instead listen more carefully to what others are saying. You are liable to take too much for granted and should refrain from doing so. And do not underestimate the ability of others. Be moderate.

Pisces
Feb 19 - March 20

There will not be time to do all you would like to do so do first what has to be done. Also try to spend a little more time with your partner and children. Do not hesitate to have a good laugh at yourself. Be consistent.

Express
8 items or less

"It's no use. I can't sleep with this wallpaper."

ARAB TIMES, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1990

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN AND OMAR SHARIF

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♦ 96542 ♦ J63 ♠ Q8 ♣ 1053

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ Dbl ?

What action do you take?

A.—You have nothing to contribute on defense and very little on offense. If you raise spades to an level, all you will accomplish is to highlight spade shortness in the enemy hands. Pass.

Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♦ 96542 ♦ 6 ♠ KJ83 ♦ 732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ Dbl ?

What action do you take?

A.—As in the previous example, show your strong hand by redoubling. That says nothing about spades—it asks partner to give you the courtesy of the road over any runout by the enemy, so you can double for penalties if you wish.

Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♦ 96542 ♦ 83 ♠ QJ95 ♦ K1042

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ Dbl ?

What action do you take?

A.—Ignore the takeout double and make the same response you would have made had East passed. Since you would normally have raised to two spades, make that bid now.

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♦ 83 ♠ AQ95 ♠ QJ95 ♦ K1042

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ Dbl ?

What action do you take?

A.—Again, ignore the double and make the bid you would have made had East passed instead. One no trump is the clear-cut action.

ARAB TIMES Classifieds

PERSONAL NA KAGAMITAN NINYO AY
AMING PAG-INGATAN!!

SA LUZON VISAYAS AT MINDANAO

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(AT5-HUS-3)

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(AT5-51623-3)

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NUGRA, Khaldoon Street, one room, furnished, with tele. facilities, for one or two bachelors to share with an Indian family. Rent - KD80. Tele. Oberoi, 4740801, 2644645, res.
(AT5-51628-3)

DAIYA Area 3, Street 37, House 7. Three rooms with water and electricity for Pakistani and Indian families. Bus routes 14, 37, 38, 18, 502. Contact Soud, after 5pm.
(AT5-51620-3)

SHARQ, behind the fire brigade, 4 bedroom apartment, available from March. Rent KD170. Tele. 2419327, upto 6 pm.
(AT5-51604-3)

SALMIYA, near the Fire Station, in suitable location, separate room in a double bedroom flat for bachelors or family. Tele. Habibur Rahman, 5723529 9am - 1pm, 4-9pm.
(AT5-51602-3)

SHARQ, near the bus stop. Spacious room with or without meals for 2 bachelors or girls. Tele. Mrs. Jaffar, 2453924, 8 am - 1.30 pm, 6 - 8.30 pm.
(AT5-51601-3)

MAIDAN Hawalli, near the Union Hall. One room with telephone facilities for 1 or 2 bachelors to share with a Goan family. Rent KD 55. Tele 5639832, after 3 pm.
(AT5-51640-3)

FARWANIYA. One room with kitchen facilities, for single or two bachelors, in a 2-bedroom flat. Very convenient location. Tele. Carvalho, 2418634, 2418550.
(AT5-51613-3)

SALWA, House 196, Block 7, Area 4, one room with water, electricity and separate kitchen for a family or bachelors to share with an Indian family. Rent KD50. Tele. 5611243.
(AT5-51603-3)

MAIDAN Hawalli. Accommodation with tele. facilities for Manila bachelors to share with a family. Tele. Nobee, 5642176, after 12.30 pm.
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(AT5-51636-3)

SHAAB, 3-bedroom, non-central, spacious apartment for rent. Items for sale, carpets, curtains, 3-door fridge and children bedroom set from 15-30. Rent KD15688, 5:30 - 8.30 pm only.
(AT5-51625-3)

TOYOTA Royal Crown, '82 model, black, full options. KD705. Interested only tele. 2400900 ext 2182.
(AT5-51623-3)

TOYOTA Cressida, 1988, AC, automatic, graphite, 50,000 kms, in excellent condition. Owner leaving Kuwait KD2750, cash. Tele. 5628159 res., after 6 pm.
(AT5-51639-2)

GALANT Royal, 1988. Fully automatic, low mileage, in very good condition. Tele. 5613675.
(AT5-51639-2)

POSCHE 928 S, 1983, fully automatic, full options, burgundy colour, low mileage, in excellent condition. Tele. 5635630 res.
(AT5-51652-3)

MERCEDES 450 SLC, Coupe '78, in immaculate condition. Tele. Hasan Sultan, 2454236, 8 - 1 pm, 4 - 7 pm, or 5:30-2:30, after 5 pm.
(AT5-51609-3)

NISSAN Liberty, 1984, white, fully automatic, insured up to Oct 1990, in very good condition. KD475. Tele. Naeem, 4832594, 8 am - 4 pm, 3902063, after 4:30 pm.
(AT5-51594-3)

Miscellaneous

SEVEN pieces sofa, matching carpet, centre table, two single beds and two cabinets. Philips rotating grill. Seb grill. All are at reasonable prices. Tele 5641260, 9 - 11 am, 6 - 8 pm.
(AT5-51627-2)

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EVENTS



KAC ex-employees honoured

The reservations staff of Kuwait Airways Corporation held a farewell party at the Meridien Hotel under the sponsorship of the Assistant Commercial Manager, Ahmad Al Hilal. The party was attended by 150 reservation employees at the company and a number of senior officials. Hilal presented two gifts, one behalf of the reservation staff, to Nadera Dwaider and Sounia Erfah who resigned recently. Both the honoured have served the company for a long time and they were also given letters of gratitude and other gifts.



Ambassador of Sri Lanka distributes prizes

Latif Sherifdeen, ambassador of Sri Lanka presents the Airlanka free ticket to H.J.S. Kumarasinghe, winner of the raffle held on the occasion of the Sri Lanka National Day Sportsmeet. The awards were given at a dinner held at Ramada Al Salem Hotel.

CINEMA

Al Andalus
Hall booked
Al Salimiya
Hall Booked
Al Hamra
Batman
Drive-in
Arabic film
Al Firdous
Agnee Path
Fahshej Open
Arabic film
Al Jabra
The Survivalist
Granada
Enter the Dragon
Sulabhikhet
Arabic film
Jieeb
Accident Swagatham
Ahmad Drive-in
Arabic film

PRAYERS

Fajr	5.00 am
Zohr	12.01 pm
Aṣr	3.17
Maghreb	5.43
Isha	7.01

WHAT'S ON

ARTS

Hobby Centre
FELTCRAFT as a medium for children to make pictures, flowers, toys etc. with felt. This new craft course will start February 27th and March 4th for 6 weeks for children from 8 years old. Tel: 5618847, 5317354

Seminars
THE seminar at the DAA, on Arabic and European Art in The Light of Zodiaco Symbolism has been postponed. It will be given during the period Feb 11 - March 11, 1990. Morning sessions on Sunday and Tuesday 11.00 - 12.30 am or evening session on Sunday and Tuesday 6.00 - 7.30 pm. Registration, maybe made by phoning the Dar Al Athar Al Islamiyah. Tel: 2430836, 2453259.

SOCIAL

Flute recital
PRESENTED by a group of 4 young Austrian artists at the Kuwait International Hotel on 24th February at 8.00 pm. Winners of the first prize at the Youth Musicians' Festival in Austria, they have recorded for the radio and television in Italy, Luxembourg, Switzerland, USSR, Egypt and Austria. In the Terrace Room. Tel: 253000 ext 8039/8040

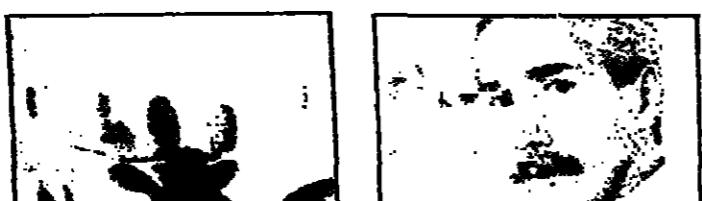
Daum of France

THE Daum people have fallen for Hilton McConnico, a charming "man of all trades" who has managed to bring a contemporary reading of the botanical inspirations of art nouveau to the French company.

McConnico is a painter, stylist, decorator, photographer, producer and designer. At the age of 16, he graduated in the first class from the Art School in Memphis, Tennessee, US, where he founded his dressmaking firm. Then he set up in business in Paris, where he worked for Ted Lapidus, Yves Saint-Laurent and Vuitton. As early as 1973, he became interested in designing sets for filmmakers, and in 1984 he obtained the Cesar award for the best art direction for J.J. Beineix Le Lune Dans le Caniveau. He also went into production of advertising films and musical clips, directed spectacles and held exhibitions for Jansen, the Galeries Lafayette and more recently, Hermès.

The need to diversify his activities continually has led McConnico to work Daum. He discovered that "glass paste" could be a prickly means of expressing one of his favourite inspirations: cacti.

In this medium, he has found the poetry and sensuality of these plants, which fascinated him for a long time. Thus, he founded the Cactus series for Daum Cristal, France.



Children's variety show

RANGDHANU, a children's variety show which includes a play, will be staged on March 1, Thursday at the Theatre Hall of Kuwait University Law Faculty, Shuaikh campus, at 6.30 pm. For cards contact 4840759, 4312730, 4312280, 4733106 or 3729425.

Goan Welfare Society

MARCH 2 - Friday Goan Welfare Society meeting will be held at Ramada Salam Hotel on 2nd March at 10 am followed by a reception at 12 noon for the Goan football team who won the exhibition match recently in Kuwait. Go vs Kerela.

Sultan Gallery

INDIAN artist Shamima Farid is showing a collection of her latest works at the Sultan Gallery, near Rolls Royce showroom. A wide selection of subjects are featured in the paintings of the artist, who has exhibited widely in Kuwait and overseas. However, this is Shamima's first solo-exhibition in Kuwait. Open daily from 9 am to 1 pm and 4 to 8 pm.

Art

ACTS production of the Skin of Our Teeth at UAS, Salwa, 8 pm, Feb 27, 28 and March 1. Directed by George Plautz. For reservations please call 5725071, 5731782.

KTV 1

- 9.00 The Opening and Holy Quran
- 9.15 Cartoons
- 9.45 Aliah Ya Hob Al Watan: Local children play Varieties
- 10.30 Children feature film
- 11.00 National varieties
- 12.45 News summary
- 1.00 The World Today via Satellite (repetition)
- 1.30 Eidak Ya Watan: Local programme which includes national varieties and some interviews and other varieties like (1) Saham Al Fadha: Cartoon serial (2) Wa Qala: Hakeem: Historical serial (3) Noor Al Islam: Religious programme (4) Security and Citizens: Local programme News in Arabic
- 9.45 National variety
- 10.15 Thaib Al Nashama: Bedouin serial, starring Gharem Al Saleh, Ali Al Mufeedi, and Rouhi Al Safadi.
- 1.15 News Summary
- 1.20 The World Today via Satellite
- 1.45 Holy Quran and Closedown

KTV 2

- 5.00 Opening announcement & Holy Quran
- 5.10 Welt Disney cartoons: 'Disney goes to the Academy Awards. A look at Disney movies and cartoons during 50 years.'
- 6.00 Childrens Film: 'Huckleberry Finn'. The river adventures of Mark Twain's scapegrace hero.
- 8.00 News in English
- 8.30 A documentary information programme.
- 9.00 Quantum Leap: 'Americanisation of Machico'. Charlie's dad refuses to accept Machico as his son's wife. Sam, with the help of the invisible man, has to make her an acceptable daughter-in-law.
- 10.00 The Ultimate Stuntman: A tribute to Dar Robinson. The man of stunt movements who participated in almost every film made in Hollywood.
- 11.00 Feature film: 'Desperado: The Outlaw War'. Starring Randolph Scott, Glenford, Evelyn Keyes. A gun-man rides into town to cause trouble, instead he finds romance and renews an old friendship.
- 12.00 News in Brief
- 12.30 Magazine D'Actualite

All entries for the What's On Column can be sent by telex (22332) to Events Section or hand delivered daily, except Thursdays, from 12 noon to 4 pm, at the Arab Times Office in Shuaikh. Photographs will also be considered for publication. Phoned-in entries will not be accepted.

Robbie in the lobby

ROBBIE 2002 a remote control robot over 1.2 metre tall will be performing in the main lobby of the Kuwait International Hotel on 23rd, 24th and 25th February at 2.00 pm and 6.00 pm. It can greet, talk, rotate, bow backwards and forwards, tap dance and perform many other tricks to entertain children of all ages. It has made over 200 television appearances the most successful being the British TV Quiz show 3.2.1 having over 17 million viewers and was seen across the world.

Tickets on sale now, KD1.00 per person. Tel: 2530000 ext 8040.

Rainbow and Philippine Youth Band performance

ON the occasion of Kuwait's National Day, the Rainbow Band and the Philippine Youth Band will be performing at 4.00 to 7.00 pm on February 22 to February 25 at the Entertainment City-Doha.

Israel & Miraj function

LECTURES on Israel & Miraj by well renowned persons at Masjid Al Abu Baker, 30, Shara Istiqbal, Dasmah (near Indian embassy) on 23.2.1990 at 5.30 pm.

Kuwait Welsh Society

ST. DAVID's Day buffet dinner Thursday, 1st March 1990 at Messal Beach Hotel. For more information ring 571346, 5912384, 5625316.

Sports

SPORTS

ARAB TIMES, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1990

Cup favourites fail to impress

Dutch, Italians draw 0-0

1988 European championship team with John Bosman deputising for Gullit and 20-year-old Richard Witschge of Ajax making his debut in the left midfield, a problem position since Arnold Muhren retired two years ago.

However, their passing often went astray with Barcelona libero Ronald Koeman wasting possession with alarming frequency.

The Italians, without four of

their most gifted players, dominated early on with Roma midfielder Giuseppe Giannini hammering a half-volley just past the upright after six minutes.

They again went close on the

half-hour as Witschge gave the ball away to

PSV Eindhoven striker Wim Kieft. Van Basten's AC Milan

and Netherlands team-mate Frank Rijkaard played just the

first half.

The Italian club had requested

the pair only 45 minutes each to

help keep them fresh for coming

club commitments.

The Dutch fielded nine of their

Baggio.

Zenga had to sprint from his line to whisk a Wouters' pass off Gerald Venanzen's toe after 52 minutes and later parried an awkward bouncing shot from Erwin Koeman.

The Italians made three second half substitutions but failed to add any spark as the game petered out to a draw.

"I saw just 25 minutes of reasonable soccer and the game overall was disappointment to me," said assistant Dutch coach Nol de Ruiter, deputising for a convalescent Thijss Libregts.

"I took Van Basten off because he didn't contribute enough in the second half," De Ruiter said, adding that Rijkaard was suffering a knee injury.

Gullit, who has a serious knee injury which could rule him out of the World Cup finals, was clearly missed.

Colombia beat Chivas for trophy

LOS ANGELES, Feb 23, (Reuters): World Cup qualifier Colombia beat Mexican team Chivas of Guadalajara in a hard-fought match to win a four-team soccer tournament at the Los Angeles Coliseum yesterday.

The only goal of the match was scored by Colombia's Alexis Meza, down on an assist from Bernardo Redin in the 54th minute of play.

Two players were ejected in the last two minutes of the match for golden play, Colombian defender Luis Carlos Perez and Chivas' Guillermo Arbelaez.

Colombia's win yesterday followed a 1-0 defeat of the Soviet Union in its tournament on Tuesday in a penalty shootout after the teams went scoreless in regulation play.

The Soviet Union beat Costa Rica 2-1 to take third place.

An aggressive Soviet side overcame a one-goal Costa Rican lead at the end of the first half to win the match. Both teams have qualified for the World Cup in Italy this year.

Striker Juan Cayasso scored the first goal of the match with a direct free kick from just over 20 yards in the 35th minute to put the Costa Ricans ahead.

Despite a strong attack and passing, the Soviets were unable to score until midway through the second half.

Soviet midfieler Gennadi Litonchuk scored unassisted with a kick from the right side in the 68th minute that bounced off the opposite post to even the score at 1-1.

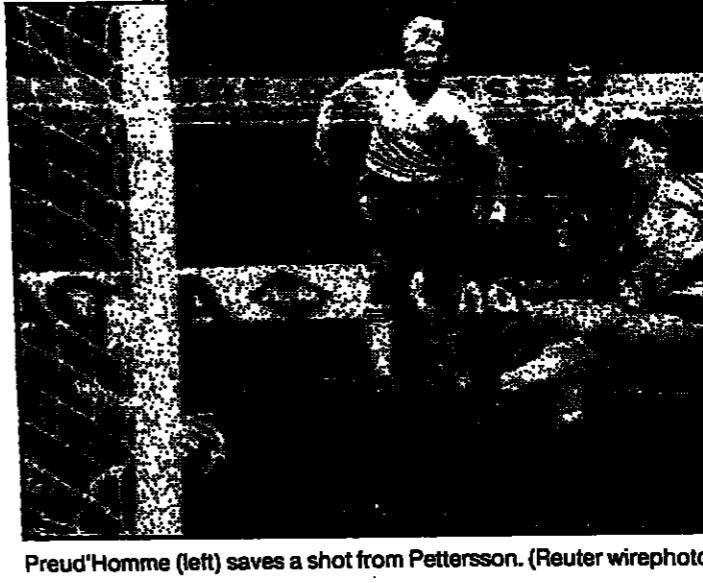
Forward Fedor Cherenkov fired in a 10-yard kick from in front of the goal in the 76th minute with an assist from team-mate Oleg Protasov to bring the Soviets ahead.

Despite the win, Soviet head coach Valeri Lobanovsky said he was unhappy with the team's play.

"We were totally unsatisfied with our performance. We are only satisfied with the result," Lobanovsky said.

"The performance of the team does not match the structure that we have developed in preparation for the World Cup, and that has to do with the condition of the players," Lobanovsky said.

Belgium hold Sweden



Spain score 1-0 victory

ALICANTE, Spain, Feb 23, (Reuters): A first half goal from winger Manolo Sanchez was enough for World Cup finalists Spain to beat Czechoslovakia 1-0 in a friendly soccer international on Wednesday.

In one of the few inspired moments of a mostly scrappy match, Manolo trapped a 42nd minute cross from midfielder Roberto Fernandez in the penalty area and dribbled round a defender before drilling the ball home.

The victory was Spain's first against Czechoslovakia since 1967.

Spain attacked consistently in the first half and opened up several scoring opportunities, while the Czechoslovaks, without a number of their leading players, were dangerous only in occasional counter-attacks.

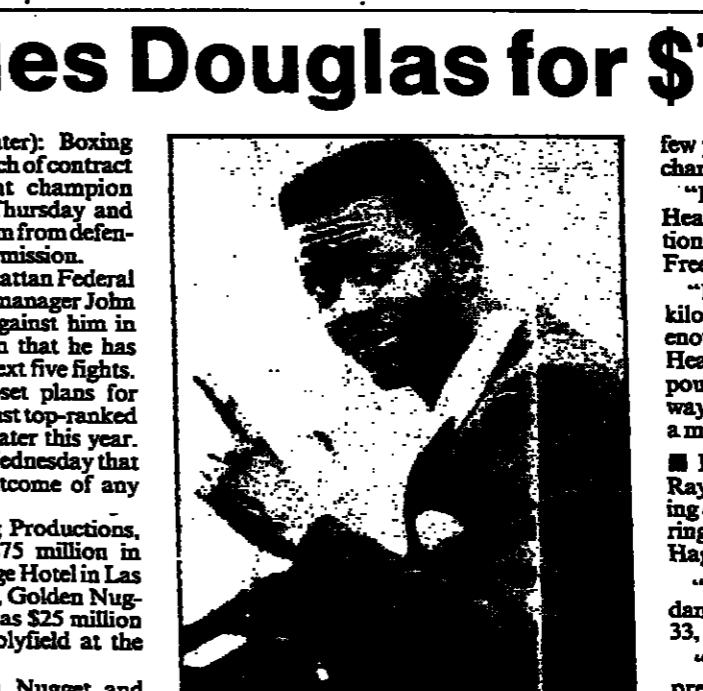
Spain's coach Luis Suarez said he was satisfied with the performance of his team against Czechoslovakia, who were also using the game as a warm-up for the finals in Italy in June.

"It was positive for us and I think we played well because the Czechs were an awkward team to handle," he said.

The Czechoslovak defenders dominated in the penalty area because of their superior height, and the Spanish forwards ultimately resorted to shooting from a distance.

They will operate different schedules for this year at least, with the two champions meeting in a playoff, but will continue working on a combined schedule.

Spain are in Group E for the first round of the finals, with Belgium, Uruguay and South Korea, while Czechoslovakia will play in Group A with hosts Italy, Austria and the United States.



few pounds and take on former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson.

"Everybody wants a piece of him now," Hearns said, according to Wednesday's editions of his hometown newspaper, the Detroit Free Press.

"I'm a walking-around 182 pounds (82 kilogrammes) right now, so I can get near enough to 200 pounds (90 kilograms)," Hearns said. "If Tyson will come down 20 pounds (9 kilograms) to 200 and train the way he did for Buster Douglas, I'd fight him in a minute."

Five time world boxing champion Sugar Ray Leonard says he does not feel any burning desire fight again unless the phone should ring with a challenge from marvellous Marvin Hagler.

"At this point in my career it has to be for a damn good reason to fight again," Leonard, 33, said.

"It has to be for a big reason and no one else presents that kind of motivation than Hagler," he said.

Leonard and Hagler squared off only once, on April 6, 1987 in Las Vegas. In a remarkable performance from a man who had not fought in more than two years, Leonard ducked and weaved, jabbed and covered up to snatch a 12-round split decision victory that ended Hagler's seven year championship reign.

Since Leonard registered a big payday victories over Canadian Donny Lalonde and Panama's Roberto Duran and fought to a draw with fellow American Tommy Hearns.

Hagler left boxing after the Leonard bout and moved to Italy to pursue an acting career.

But the recent financial success of peers such as Leonard, Duran, Hearns, and former heavyweight champion George Foreman on the so-called senior circuit have prompted rumours in the boxing world of Hagler's return to the ring.

And a return of the menacing Hagler is just what it will take for Leonard to put on the gloves and get back in shape.

"It has to be something I can get up for and it is tough for me to get up for just anyone," Leonard said. "For me it has to be a stimulus ... so I can put myself through that kind of training regimen again."

JAYNE JONES

SPORTS



The Dutch team with the Cup. (Reuter wirephoto)

Bovlander helps Dutch win World Hockey Cup

LAHORE, Pakistan, Feb 23, (Reuter): Floris Bovlander was the Dutch hero, scoring twice from penalty corners, as they beat Pakistan 3-1 in the World Hockey Cup final today to lift their first major title since 1973.

He scored twice in the space of two minutes after Pakistan had sent the noisy, flag waving crowd wild by taking an early lead.

Shahbaz Ahmad, one of the tournament's outstanding players, jinked through and flicked the ball past Frank Liestra in the Dutch goal after only five minutes.

Fans broke down gates to swell the

National Hockey Stadium's 55,000 capacity to around 70,000—convinced they were going to see their side win the cup for the fourth time.

They clambered on top of hoardings and the roof of stands to watch the action.

But after the early elation of Shahbaz's goal, Bovlander scored in the 12th and 14th minutes and Gys Weterings added the third early in the second half.

Although the Dutch won the European title in 1987, were third at the Seoul Olympics and held the Intercontinental Cup, this was their first major

title for 17 years.

Pakistan dominated the early stages, gaining the lead through Shahbaz' goal.

But a break while Dutch sweeper René Klaassen received medical attention gave the Netherlands a chance to regroup and they then began to take control.

The elusive Tom van't Hek gained the Netherlands their first penalty corner and Bovlander lived up to his reputation, smacking his shot past the prone Pakistani goalkeeper's outstretched arms.

Two minutes later Hek won another

penalty corner and Bovlander put the Dutch 2-1 ahead with a shot that ricocheted into the goal off the goalkeeper. It was Bovlander's ninth goal of the tournament.

The Netherlands sealed the result shortly after the break when left winger Gys Weterings lashed home a fierce shot.

Pakistan were unlucky in the closing moments when Qazi Mohib struck the right post with a penalty shot, but by then it was clear the Dutch were going to walk away with the cup.

Earlier, defending champions Australia outplayed West Germany to win

2-1 and take third place in the tournament.

Surprise choice Jay Stacy scored for Australia from their first penalty corner, with a powerful flick in the eighth minute.

Left winger Neil Hawgood added to their lead in the 41st minute, while Carsten Fischer pulled one back for the Germans with a penalty corner drive in the 57th minute.

The Germans, with an eye to the future, fielded several youngsters, but brought on Stefan Blöcher and Eckhardt Schmidt-Opper for the second half.

SPORTS BRIEFS

SAS bridge

RESULTS OF SAS bridge game held on Tuesday:

N/S

1. Mrs Dona & Dr Adel

2. Sherin & El Baz

3. Mrs Bianca & A Tawil

E/W

1. Gajjar & Banoy

2. Shah & Zubairi

3. Latifa & Reddy

Best mix-pair: Mrs Pereira &

D'Souza.

Appeal lost

LONDON, Feb 23, (Reuter): John McEnroe has lost his appeal against fines imposed during the Australian Open and could be banned from playing other Grand Slam tournaments if he runs into further trouble this year, tennis officials said today.

Kuwait Trophy

AJAZ and Mansoor will lead the Kuwait teams in the Kuwait Cricket Trophy on February 25, being played at the Quaid-e-Millat Airport ground on the occasion of the Kuwait National Day. The Kuwait Cricket Trophy is being organised by Morning Star cricketers and the organisers have named the two teams and also an airline ticket to Pakistan for the Man of the Match. The match will start at 9.00 am.

Panam Games

HAVANA, Feb 23, (Reuter): The chief organiser of the 1991 Pan American Games in Cuba said yesterday he hoped the US government would come to its senses and stop blocking planned television coverage of the event by the US network ABC. ABC has been refused permission to televise the August, 1991 Games because the network would have to pay a fee of about \$6.5 million to Cuba which would violate a US trade embargo against the communist ruled island.

Taxes underpaid

CINCINNATI, Feb 23, (AP): The internal revenue service has documented that Pete Rose underpaid his taxes by more than \$100,000 between 1985 and 1987, according to a report Wednesday in the Plain Dealer of Cleveland.

American sprinter

NEW YORK, Feb 23, (Reuter): Though best remembered for not keeping track of time, American sprinter Eddie Hart has decided it is time to get back on the track. At 40 years old, the former co-holder of the 100 metres world record will get his first crack at the world's elite in nearly 18 years when he competes at the US Indoor Athletics Championships in New York this evening.

NBA games

NEW YORK, Feb 23, (Reuter): Results of National Basketball Association games played yesterday:

New York	119	Washington	110
Milwaukee	109	Dallas	97
Utah	116	LA Clippers	102
Phoenix	104	Sacramento	98

Unified team

KUWAIT, Feb 23, (UPI): South and North Yemen will field a unified team for the time at the XI Asian Games in Beijing Sept 22 - Oct 7. Sheikh Fahad Al Sabah, president of the Olympic Council of Asia, received confirmation Wednesday, according to a secretary-general Abdul Mutaleb Ahmed.

Tyson's sister

NEW YORK, Feb 23, (UPI): Mike Tyson's 24-year-old sister was found dead Wednesday in her home and police said preliminary indications were that the overweight woman suffered a heart attack. Denise Anderson, 24, was found by her husband about 8.40 am in their Queens home, said officer Ralph St Just.

WBC president

MEXICO CITY, Feb 23, (UPI): Jose Sulaiman, the embattled president of the World Boxing Council, Wednesday received unanimous support from his group's executive committee and will remain at the job he has held the last 15 years.

Hall of Fame

NEWPORT, Rhode Island, Feb 23, (UPI): Jan Kodes, the unassuming Czechoslovakian who won Wimbledon and the French Open, tomorrow will be named as the newest inductee to the International Tennis Hall of Fame. "I compare this to winning one of the Grand Slams," Kodes, 43, said in a telephone interview yesterday from Prague.

Linares chess

LINALES, Spain, Feb 23, (Reuter): Boris Gulko of the United States beat Yugoslavia's Ljubomir Ljubojevic yesterday in the Linares chess tournament, winning a fourth round game that had been adjourned on Wednesday. Gulko won in 78 moves.

Oman hold UAE 1-1

Bahrain, Qatar play to goalless draw

THE United Arab Emirates, contenders for the World Cup, were stunned by rank outsiders Oman in a 1-1 draw on Thursday in the 10th Arab Cup Gulf football tournament. The half-time score was 1-0 to Oman.

The Emirates' Polish coach Bernard Blaut told a post-match press conference: "I have never seen my team play this kind of football before ... we missed at least five open chances."

Blaut partly blamed an uneven pitch for the loss. He also said that he had to change the team at the last minute before the match. "One of the main strikers, Zuhair Bakht, was unused, therefore we had to shuffle the lineup," the ex-Polish international said.

But he still said: "I don't know and can't explain why our boys played such bad football." The Polish coach took over in January from Brazilian Mario Zagalo who was fired by the UAE Football Association.

The game was played at the Friendship and Peace Stadium.

Oman scored their goal in the 29th minute. Zaher Salim took an indirect kick from 30 yards (metres). Hilal Hamoud headed the ball which hit the UAE

keeper Mohsin Musbah's knees.

The stocky goalkeeper, who played a prominent role in UAE's qualification through the second round of the World Cup, lost his balance and fell inside his own goal to give Oman the lead.

Oman kept a tight marking in the midfield, blocking the movement of the white-shirted UAE players.

As Oman's West German coach Bernd Patzke anticipated, the UAE came back with force in the second half, grabbing the initiative and scoring the equal-

izer in the 58th minute through substitute Fahad Khamis.

Khamis headed home a rebound from the crossbar.

"To take a point away from the team going to Italy for the World Cup finals is a great achievement for us," Patzke said.

The tournament, the 10th to be held by the Arab States of the Gulf region, is played by the UAE, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Iraq.

The kick-off match in the tourna-

ment, which goes through March 9 was between Kuwait and Bahrain on Feb 21, with the hosts defeating Bahrain 1-0.

Both Kuwait and Iraq, the current champions of the biennial event, are the favourites to win this contest.

■ Bahrain kept their hopes alive

after managing a goalless draw against Qatar. This was the first match for Qatar.

Both teams played a slow game in the first half but improved in the second, particularly Qatar, who missed a number of easy scoring chances.

Bahrain were saved on several occasions by their veteran excellent goalkeeper, Hmoud Sultan. He stood solid in his goal and prevented several clear chances from Qatar's Murtah and Sufi.

The best chance for the match was missed by Qatar's Adel Khamees halfway through second half, when he got a neat pass and had only to beat Sultan. Khamees lopped the ball over the advancing Sultan but the ball touched the upper edge of the bar and went for a goal kick.

In today's match to be played at 3.45 pm, Kuwait will be

eagerly looking to add two more points at the cost of Oman.



An action shot of the Oman, UAE match.

Oldham, Everton draw

Villa move to the top

LONDON, Feb 23, (Reuter): Aston Villa beat Tottenham 2-0 on Wednesday to go clear at the top of the English soccer First Division for the first time since they won the League title in 1981.

Ian Ormondroyd and David Platt were the scorers as Villa virtually killed off Tottenham's hopes of League glory and went two points clear of Liverpool with one game still in hand.

Ormondroyd blasted Villa ahead after 51 minutes, racing in unchallenged to slam his shot past keeper Erik Thorstvedt, while Platt claimed his 21st goal of the season the 66th.

Villa's win stood out in stark contrast to the night's fifth round replays for the Football Association (FA) Cup, in which all four matches ended in draws after extra time.

Everton, runners-up last year, struggled at a 1-1 draw at home against Second Division Oldham — who have already effectively won a League Cup final place — after Ian Marshall put the visitors 1-0 ahead 12 minutes into extra time.

Playing with only 10 men after Northern Ireland international Norman Whiteside was sent off in the 48th minute, Everton were saved by Kevin Sheedy six minutes from time.

The second replay will be at Oldham on Feb 28 with the winners playing Villa in the quarterfinals.

Third Division Blackpool battled to a goalless draw at First Division Queens Park Rangers while Fourth Division Cambridge went ahead after 34 seconds of extra time against Third Division Bristol City, only to lose the lead three minutes later.

The night's all Second Division tie between Barnsley and Sheffield United finished goalless, and they will try again next Monday, with Barnsley having home advantage.

■ Aston Villa defender Kevin Gage is determined

to shake off a personal jinx and help his side to extend their English League lead when they entertain Wimbledon tomorrow.

Gage missed out on an FA Cup winners' medal in 1988 when he left Wimbledon for Villa and since then has never been on the winning side against his former club.

"We lost to them 1-0 three times last season and I was out injured when we won there 2-0 this season," Gage said.

"I know that Wimbledon love putting one over on the big clubs. People regard them as the paupers of the First Division and they will be relishing the chance of knocking us off our perch."

With second-placed Liverpool not playing this weekend, Aston Villa, have the chance to go five points clear.

"We may not be in the same class as Liverpool but are effective in what we do and play to our strengths," said Gage.

But assistant manager John Ward warned that Villa, looking for their eight successive League win, would have to fight to protect their lead.

Chelsea will face Manchester United without their captain Graham Roberts who has a groin injury but Scottish international striker Gordon Durie should fit.

The visiting Manchester side will include Paul Ince who returned as a substitute in the FA Cup fifth round win against Newcastle last Sunday after missing two games because of a hamstring injury.

Southampton manager Chris Nicholl hopes to have winger Matthew Le Tissier, who missed last week's FA Cup defeat at Liverpool with a turned ankle, back in action for their visit to struggling Luton.

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■ Aston Villa defender Kevin Gage is determined

Becker sails past Mecir for semifinals

STUTTGART, West Germany, Feb 23, (Reuter): Wimbledon champion Boris Becker moved closer to a clash with Ivan Lendl, the man he is determined to displace as number one in world tennis, when he reached the semifinals of the Stuttgart Clasic ATP event today.

The world number two, who last month pulled out of a West German Davis Cup tie to give himself more time to concentrate on his goal, powered his way past Czechoslovak Olympic champion Miloslav Mecir 6-4 6-2 in the quarterfinals of the \$1 million tournament.

Becker, perilously close to elimination from the event yesterday in a tough three-set encounter with Soviet Alexander Volkov, always looked in control against Mecir.

Becker is seeded to meet Czechoslovak Lendl in the final on Sunday. But the route will not be easy.

The West German faces an awkward semifinal on Saturday with in-form Swede Jonas Svensson who has beaten two of the top six seeds on his way to the last four.

Svensson, ranked 44th in the world, swept aside Austrian sixth seed Horst Skoff 6-2 6-4 in his quarter-final.

Seventh seed Peter O'Malley, fresh from finishing seventh in the Australian Masters on Sunday, holed from 30 feet for one of his three birdies. A 300 yards drive set up an eagle at

Darcy increases lead

DUBAI, Feb 23, (Reuter): Ireland's Eamonn Darcy doubled his overnight lead to six strokes after a 68 in yesterday's second round of the Desert Classic golf tournament.

He moved 12-under-par on 132, with Australian Peter O'Malley his closest challenger after a round of 70.

Darcy, who last achieved a tour victory in the 1987 Belgian Open said: "Defending a lead which was nine strokes at one stage is tricky. I just concentrated on staying aggressive."